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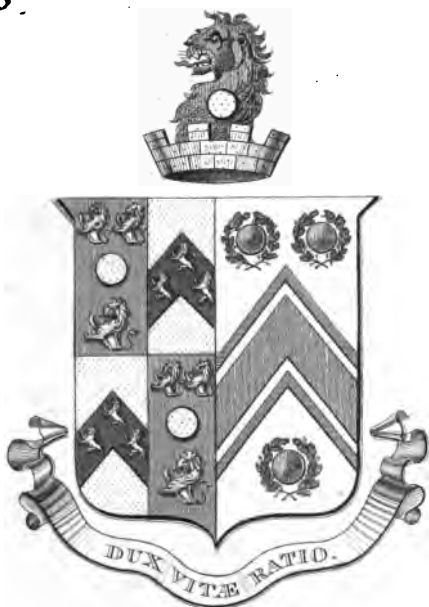
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735.



Rev. Henry Leigh Bennett.

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DON JUAN.

CANTOS VI.—VII.—VIII.

"Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall
be no more Cakes and Ale?—Yes, by St. Anne; and
Ginger shall be hot i'the mouth too!"—*Twelfth*
Night; or What You Will.—SHAKESPEARE.



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PREFACE

TO
CANTOS VI.—VII.—VIII.

THE details of the Siege of Ismail in two of the following Cantos (i. e. the 7th and 8th) are taken from a French work entitled "*Histoire de la Nouvelle Russie*." Some of the incidents attributed to Don Juan really occurred, particularly the circumstance of his saving the infant, which was the actual case of the late Duc de Richelieu, then a young volunteer in the Russian service, and afterwards the founder and benefactor of Odessa, where his name and memory can never cease to be regarded with reverence. In the course of these cantos, a stanza or two will be found relative to the late Marquis of Londonderry, but written some time before his decease. Had that person's Oligarchy died with him, they would have been suppressed; as it is, I am aware of nothing in the manner of his death or of his life to prevent the free expression of the opinions of all whom his whole existence was consumed in endeavouring to enslave. That he was an amiable man in *private* life, may or may not be true; but with this the public have nothing to do; and as to lamenting his death, it will be time enough when Ireland has ceased to mourn for his birth. As a Minister, I, for one of millions, looked upon him as the most despotic in intention, and the weakest in intellect, that ever tyrannised over a country. It is the first time indeed since the Normans, that England has been insulted by a *Minister* (at least) who could not speak English, and that Parliament permitted itself to be dictated to in the language of Mrs. Malaprop.

Of the manner of his death little need be said, except that if a poor radical, such as Waddington or Watson, had cut his throat, he would have been buried in a cross-road, with the usual appurtenances of the stake and halberd. But the Minister was an elegant Lunatic—a sentimental Suicide—he merely cut the "carotid artery" (blessings on their learning,) and lo! the Pageant, and the Abbey! and "the Syllables of Dolour yelled forth" by the Newspapers—and the harangue of the Coroner in an eulogy over the bleeding body of the deceased—(an Anthony worthy of such a Cæsar)—and the nauseous and atrocious cant of a degraded Crew of Conspirators against all that is sincere or honourable. In his death he was necessarily one of two things by the *law*—a felon or a madman—and in either case no great subject for panegyric.* In his life he was—what all the world knows, and half of it will feel for years to come, unless his death prove a "moral lesson" to the surviving Sejamī† of Europe. It

I say by the LAW of the LAND—the laws of Humanity judge more gently; but as the legitimates have always the law in their mouths, let them here make the most of it.

† From this number must be excepted Canning: Canning is a ge-

may at least serve as some consolation to the Nations, that their Oppressors are not happy, and in some instances judge so justly of their own actions as to anticipate the sentence of mankind. Let us hear no more of this man, and let Ireland remove the ashes of her Grattan from the Sanctuary of Westminster. Shall the Patriot of Humanity repose by the Werther of Politics!!!

With regard to the objections which have been made on another score to the already published Cantos of this poem, I shall content myself with two quotations from Voltaire:

“La pudeur s'est enfuite des cœurs, et s'est réfugiée sur les levres.”

“Plus les mœurs sont depraves, plus les expressions deviennent mesurées; on croit regagner en langage ce qu'on a perdu en vertu.”

This is the real fact, as applicable to the degraded and hypocritical mass which leavens the present English generation, and is the only answer they deserve. The hackneyed and lavished title of Blasphemer---which, with radical, liberal, jacobin, reformer, &c. are the changes which the hirelings are daily ringing in the ears of those who will listen---should be welcome to all who recollect on *whom* it was originally bestowed. Socrates and Jesus Christ were put to death publicly as *Blasphemers*, and so have been and may be many who dare to oppose the most notorious abuses of the name of God and the mind of man. But Persecution is not refutation, nor even triumph: the “wretched infidel,” as he is called, is probably happier in his prison than the proudest of his assailants. With his opinions I have nothing to do---they may be right or wrong---but he has suffered for them, and that very Suffering for conscience-sake will make more proselytes to Deism than the example of heterodox * prelates to Christianity, suicide statesmen to oppression, or over-pensioned homicides to the impious alliance which insults the world with the name of “Holy!” I have no wish to trample on the dishonoured or the dead; but it would be well if the adherents to the Classes from whence those persons sprung should abate a little of the *Cant* which is the crying sin of this double-dealing and false-speaking time of selfish Spoilers, and-----but enough for the present.

plus, almost an universal one, an orator, a wit, a poet, a statesman, and no man of talent can long pursue the path of his late predecessor Lord C. If ever man saved his country Canning can; but will he? I for one hope so.

* When Lord Sandwich said “he did not know the difference between “Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy”—Warburton the bishop replied, “Orthodoxy---my Lord---is my doxy---and Heterodoxy is ANOTHER MAN'S DOXY”---A prelate of the present day has discovered, it seems, a THIRD kind of doxy, which has not greatly exalted in the eyes of the elect that which Bentham calls “Church-of-Englandism.”

DON JUAN.

CANTO VI.

I.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men

"Which taken at the flood"—you know the rest,
And most of us have found it, now and then ;

At least we think so, though but few have guess'd
The moment, till too late to come again.

But no doubt every thing is for the best—
Of which the surest sign is in the end,
When things are at the worst they sometimes mend.

II.

There is a tide in the affairs of women

"Which taken at the flood leads"—God knows where,
Those navigators must be able seamen

Whose charts lay down its currents to a hair ;
Not all the reveries of Jacob Behmen

With its strange whirls and eddies can compare :—
Men with their heads reflect on this and that—
But women with their hearts, or heaven knows what !

B

III.

And yet a headlong, headstrong, downright she,
Young, beautiful, and daring—who would risk
A throne, the world, the universe, to be
Beloved in her own way, and rather whisk
The stars from out the sky, than not be free
As are the billows when the breeze is brisk—
Though such a she's a devil (if that there be one)
Yet she would make full many a Manichean.

IV.

Thrones, worlds, et cetera, are so oft upset
By commonest Ambition, that when Passion
O'erthrows the same, we readily forget,
Or at the least forgive, the loving rash one.
If Anthony be well remembered yet,
'Tis not his conquests keep his name in fashion ;
But Actium, lost for Cleopatra's eyes,
Outbalance all the Cæsar's victories.

V.

He died at fifty for a queen of forty ;
I wish their years had been fifteen and twenty,
For then wealth, kingdoms, worlds are but a sport—I
Remember when, though I had no great plenty
Of worlds to lose, yet still, to pay my court, I
Gave what I had—a heart :—as the world went, I
Gave what was worth a world ; for worlds could never
Restore me those pure feelings, gone for ever.

VI.

'Twas the boy's "mite," and like the "widow's" may
Perhaps he weighed hereafter, if not now ;
But whether such things do, or do not, weigh,
All who have loved, or love, will still allow
Life has nought like it. God is love, they say,
And Love's a God, or was before the brow
Of Earth was wrinkled by the sins and tears
Of—but Chronology best knows the years.

VII.

We left our hero and third heroine in
A kind of state more awkward than uncommon,
For gentlemen must sometimes risk their skin
For that sad tempter, a forbidden woman ;
Sultans too much abhor this sort of sin,
And don't agree at all with the wise Roman,
Heroic, stoic Cato, the sententious,
Who lent his lady to his friend Hortensius.

VIII.

I know Gulbeyaz was extremely wrong ;
I own it, I deplore it, I condemn it ;
But I detest all fiction even in song,
And so must tell the truth, howe'er you blame it,
Her reason being weak, her passions strong,
She thought that her lord's heart (even could she claim it)
Was scarce enough ; for he had fifty-nine
Years, and a fifteen-hundredth concubine.

IX.

I am not, like Cassio, "an arithmetician,"

But by "the bookish theoric" it appears,
If 'tis summed up with feminine precision,

That, adding to the account his Highness' years,
The fair sultana erred from inanition ;

For were the Sultan just to all his dears,
She could but claim the fifteen-hundredth part
Of what should be monopoly—the heart.

X.

It is observed that ladies are litigious

Upon all legal objects of possession,
And not the least so when they are religious,

Which doubles what they think of the transgression.
With suits and prosecutions they besiege us,
As the tribunals show through many a session,
When they suspect that any one goes shares
In that to which the law makes them sole heirs.

XI.

Now if this holds good in a Christian land,

The heathen also, though with lesser latitude,
Are apt to carry things with a high hand,

And take, what kings call "an imposing attitude ;"
And for their rights connubial make a stand,

When their liege husbands treat them with ingrati-
And as four wives must have quadruple claims, [tude ;
The Tigris hath its jealousies like Thames.

XII.

Gulbeyaz was the fourth, and (as I said)

The favourite ; but what's favour amongst four ?
Polygamy may well be held in dread,

Not only as a sin, but as a *bore* :—
Most wise men with *one* moderate woman wed,
Will scarcely find philosophy for more ;
And all (except Mahometans) forbear
To make the nuptial couch a “ Bed of Ware.”

XIII.

His Highness, the sublimest of mankind,—
So styled according to the usual forms
Of every monarch, till they are consigned
To those sad hungry jacobins the worms,
Who on the very loftiest kings have dined,—
His Highness gazed upon Gulbeyaz' charms,
Expecting all the welcome of a lover,
(A “ Highland welcome” all the wide world over.)

XIV.

Now here we should distinguish ; for howe'er
Kisses, sweet words, embraces, and all that,
May look like what is—neither here nor there ;
They are put on as easily as a hat,
Or rather bonnet, which the fair-sex wear,
Trimmed either heads or hearts to decorate,
Which form an ornament, but no more part
Of heads, than their caresses of the heart.

XV.

A slight blush, a soft tremor, a calm kind
Of gentle feminine delight, and shown
More in the eyelids than the eyes, resigned
Rather to hide what pleases most unknown,
Are the best token (to a modest mind)
Of love, when seated on his loveliest throne,
A sincere woman's breast,—for over *warm*
Or over *cold* annihilates the charm.

XVI.

For over warmth, if false, is worse than truth ;
If true, 'tis no great lease of its own fire ;
For no one, save in very early youth,
Would like (I think) to trust all to desire,
Which is but a precarious bond, in sooth,
And apt to be transferred to the first buyer
At a sad discount : while your over chilly
Women, on t'other hand, seem somewhat silly,

XVII.

That is, we cannot pardon their bad taste,
For so it seems to lovers, swift or slow,
Who fain would have a mutual flame confest,
And see a sentimental passion glow,
Even were St. Francis' paramour their guest,
In his monastic Concubine of Snow ;—
In short the maxim for the amorous tribe is
Horatian, " Medio tu tutissimus ibis."

XVIII.

The "tu" 's too much,—but let it stand—the verse
Requires it, that's to say, the English rhyme,
And not the pink of old hexameters ;
But, after all, there's neither tune nor time
In the last line, which cannot well be worse,
And was thrust in to close the octave's chime :
I own no prosody can ever rate it
As a rule, but *Truth* may, if you translate it.

XIX.

If fair Gulbeyaz overdid her part,
I know not—it succeeded, and success
Is much in most things, not less in the heart
Than other articles of female dress.
Self-love in man, too, beats all female art ;
They lie, we lie, all lie, but love no less :
And no one virtue yet, except Starvation,
Could stop that worst of vices—Propagation.

XX.

We leave this royal couple to repose ;
A bed is not a throne, and they may sleep,
Whate'er their dreams be, if of joys or woes ;
Yet disappointed joys are woes as deep
As any man's clay mixture undergoes.
Our least of sorrows are such as we weep ;
'Tis the vile daily drop on drop which wears
The soul out (like the stone) with petty cares.

XXI.

A scolding wife, a sullen son, a bill
To pay, unpaid, protested, or discounted
At a per-centage ; a child cross, deg ill,
A favourite horse fallen lame just as he's mounted ;
A bad old woman making a worse will,
Which leaves you minus of the cash you counted
As certain ;—these are paltry things, and yet
I've rarely seen the man they did not fret.

XXII.

I'm a philosopher ; confound them all !
Bills, beasts, and men, and—no ! *not* Womankind !
With one good hearty curse I vent my gall,
And then my Stoicism leaves nought behind
Which it can either pain or evil call,
And I can give my whole soul up to mind ;
Though what *is* soul or mind, their birth or growth,
Is more than I know—the deuce take them both.

XXIII.

So now all things are d—n'd, one feels at ease,
As after reading Athanasius' curse,
Which doth your true believer so much please :
I doubt if any now could make it worse
O'er his worst enemy when at his knees,
'Tis so sententious, positive and terse,
And decorates the book of Common Prayer,
As doth a rainbow the just clearing air.

DON JUAN.

XXIV.

Gulbeyaz and her lord were sleeping, or
At least one of them—Oh the heavy night !
When wicked wives who love some bachelor
Lie down in dudgeon to sigh for the light
Of the gray morning, and look vainly for
Its twinkle through the lattice dusky quite,
To toss, to tumble, doze, revive, and quake
Lest their too lawful bed-fellow should wake.

XXV.

These are beneath the canopy of heaven,
Also beneath the canopy of beds
Four-posted and silk-curtained, which are given
For rich men and their brides to lay their heads
Upon, in sheets white as what bards call “ driven
Snow.” Well ! ’tis all hap-hazard when one weds.
Gulbeyaz was an empress, but had been
Perhaps as wretched if a *peasant's* queen.

XXVI.

Don Juan in his feminine disguise
With all the damsels in their long array,
Had bow'd themselves before the Imperial eyes,
And at the usual signal ta'en their way
Back to their chambers, those long galleries
In the Seraglio, where the ladies lay
Their delicate limbs ; a thousand bosoms
Beating for love, as the caged bird's for air.

XXVII.

I love the sex, and sometimes would reverse
The tyrant's wish, "that mankind only had
"One neck, which he with one fell stroke might pierce:"
My wish is quite as wide, but not so bad,
And much more tender on the whole than fierce;
It being (not *now*, but only while a lad)
That Womankind had but one rosy mouth,
To kiss them all at once from North to South.

XXVIII.

Oh enviable Briareus ! with thy hands
And heads, if thou hadst all things multiplied
In such proportion !—But my muse withstands
The gaint thought of being a Titan's bride,
Or travelling in Patagonian lands;
So let us back to Lilliput, and guide
Our hero through the labyrinth of love
In which we left him several lines above.

XXIX.

He went forth with the lovely Odalisques,
At the given signal joined to their array ;
And though he certainly ran many risks,
Yet he could not, at times keep, by the way,
(Although the consequences of such frisks
And worse than the worst damages men pay
In moral England, where the thing's a tax,)
From ogling all their charms from breasts to backs.

XXX.

Still he forgot not his disguise,—along
 The galleries from room to room they walked,
 A virgin-like and edifying throng,
 By eunuchs flanked ; while at their head there stalked
 A dame who kept up discipline among
 The female ranks, so that none stirred or talked
 Without her sanction on their she-parades :
 Her title was “ the Mother of the Maids.”

XXXI.

Whether she was a “ mother,” I know not,
 Or whether they were “ maids” who called her mo-
 But this is her seraglio title, got [ther ;
 I know not how, but good as any other ;
 So Cantemir can tell you, or De Tott :
 Her office was, to keep aloof or smother
 All bad propensities in fifteen hundred
 Young women, and correct them when they blundered.

XXXII.

A goodly sinecure, no doubt ; but made
 More easy by the absence of all men
 Except his Majesty, who, with her aid,
 And guards, and bolts, and walls, and now and then
 A slight example, just to cast a shade
 Along the rest, contrived to keep this den
 Of beauties cool as an Italian convent
 Where all the passions have, alas ! but one vent.

XXXIII.

And what is that? Devotion, doubtless—how
Could you ask such a question?—but we will
Continue. As I said, this goodly row
Of ladies of all countries at the will
Of one good man, with stately march and slow,
Like water-lillies floating down a rill,
Or rather lake—for *rills* do *not* run *slowly*,—
Paced on most maiden-like and melancholy.

XXXIV.

But when they reached their own apartments, there,
Like birds, or boys, or bedlamites broke loose,
Waves at spring-tide, or women any where
When freed from bonds (which are of no great use
After all) or like Irish at a fair,
Their guards being gone, and as it were a truce
Established between them and bondage, they
Began to sing, dance, chatter, smile and play.

XXXV.

Their talk of course ran most on the new comer,
Her shape, her hair, her air, her every thing :
Some thought her dress did not so much become her,
Or wondered at her ears without a ring ;
Some said her years were getting nigh their summer,
Others contended they were but in spring ;
Some thought her rather masculine in height,
While others wished that she had been so quite.

XXXVI.

But no one doubted on the whole, that she
Was what her dress bespoke, a damsel fair,
And fresh, and "beautiful exceedingly,"
Who with the brightest Georgians might compare :
They wondered how Gulbeyaz too could be
So silly as to buy slaves who might share
(If that his Highness wearied of his bride)
Her throne and power and every thing beside.

XXXVII.

But what was strangest in this virgin crew,
Although her beauty was enough to vex,
After the first investigating view,
They all found out as few, or fewer, specks
In the fair form of their companion new,
Than is the custom of the gentle sex,
When they survey, with Christian eyes or Heathen,
In a new face "the ugliest creature breathing."

XXXVIII.

And yet they had their little jealousies
Like all the rest ; but upon this occasion,
Whether there are such things as sympathies
Without our knowledge or our approbation,
Although they could not see through his disguise,
All felt a soft kind of concatenation,
Like Magnetism, or Devilism, or what
You please—we will not quarrel about that :

C

XXXIX.

But certain 'tis they all felt for their new
Companion something newer still, as 'twere
A sentimental friendship through and through,
Extremely pure, which made them all concur
In wishing her their sister, save a few

Who wished they had a brother just like her,
Whom, if they were at home in sweet Circassia,
They would prefer to Padisha or Pacha.

XL.

Of those who had most genius for this sort
Of sentimental friendship, there were three,
Lolah, Katinka, and Dudu ;—in short,
(To save description) fair as fair can be
Were they, according to the best report,
Though differing in the stature and degree,
And clime and time, and country and complexion ;
They all alike admired their new connexion.

XLI.

Lolah was dusk as India and as warm ;
Katinka was a Georgian, white and red,
With great blue eyes, a lovely hand and arm,
And feet so small they scarce seemed made to tread,
But rather skim the earth ; while Dudu's form
Looked more adapted to be put to bed,
Being somewhat large and languishing and lazy,
Yet of a beauty that would drive you crazy.

XLII.

A kind of sleepy Venus seemed Dudn,
Yet very fit to "murder sleep" in those
Who gazed upon her cheek's transcendant hue,
Her Attic forehead, and her Phidian nose :
Few angles were there in her form, 'tis true,
Thinner she might have been and yet scarce lose :
Yet after all, 'twould puzzle to say where
It would not spoil some separate charm to *pare*.

XLIII.

She was not violently lively, but
Stole on your spirit like a May-day breaking ;
Her eyes were not too sparkling, yet, half-shut,
They put beholders in a tender taking ;
She looked (this simile's quite new) just cut
From marble, like Pigmalion's statue waking,
The Mortal and the Marble still at strife,
And timidly expanding into life.

XLIV.

Lolah demanded the new damsel's name—
"Juanna."—Well, a pretty name enough,
Katinka asked her also whence she came— [such stuff,
"From Spain."—"But where is Spain?"—"Dont ask
"Nor shew your Georgian ignorance—for shame !"
Said Lolah, with an accent rather rough,
To poor Katinka : "Spain's an island near
Morocco, betwixt Egypt and Tangier."

XLV.

Dudu said nothing, but sat down beside
Juanna, playing with her veil or hair ;
And looking at her stedfastly, she sighed,
As if she pitied her for being there,
A pretty stranger without friend or guide,
And all abashed too at the general stare
Which welcomes hapless strangers in all places,
With kind remarks upon their mien and faces.

XLVI.

But here the Mother of the Maids drew near,
With " Ladies, it is time to go to rest.
" I'm puzzled what to do with you, my dear,"
She added to Juanna, their new guest :
" Your coming has been unexpected here,
" And every couch is occupied ; you had best
" Partake of mine ; but by to-morrow early
" We will have all things settled for you fairly."

XLVII.

Here Lolah interposed—" Mamma, you know
" You don't sleep soundly, and I cannot bear
" That any body should disturb you so ;
" I'll take Juanna ; we're a slenderer pair
" Than you would make the half of ;—don't say no,
" And I of your young charge will take due care.
But here Katinka interfered and said,
" She also had compassion and a bed."

XLVIII.

"Besides, I hate to sleep alone," quoth she.

The matron frowned: "Why so?"—"For fear of
Replied Katinka; "I am sure I see [ghosts,"

"A phantom upon each of the four posts;

"And then I have the worst dreams that can be,

"Of Guebres, Giaours, and Ginns, and Gouls in hosts."

The dame replied, "Between your dreams and you,

"I fear Juanna's dreams would be but few.

XLIX.

"You, Lolah, must continue still to lie

"Alone, for reasons which don't matter; you

"The same, Katinka, until by and bye;

"And I shall place Juanna with Dudu,

"Who's quiet, inoffensive, silent, shy,

"And will not toss and chatter the night through.

"What say you, child?"—Dudu said nothing, as

Her talents were of the more silent class;

L.

But she rose up, and kissed the matron's brow

Between the eyes and Lolah on both cheeks

Katinka too; and with a gentle bow

(Curtseys are neither used by Turks nor Greeks)

She took Juanna by the hand to show

Their place of rest, and left to both their piques

The others pouting at the matron's preference

Of Dudu, though they held their tongues from deference.

LI.

It was a spacious chamber (Oda is
The Turkish title) and ranged round the wall
Were couches, toilets—and much more than this

I might describe, as I have seen it all,
But it suffices—little was amiss ;

'Twas on the whole a nobly furnished hall,
With all things ladies want, save one or two,
And even those were nearer than they knew.

LII.

Dudu, as has been said, was a sweet creature,
Not very dashing, but extremely winning,
With the most regulated charms of feature,

Which painters cannot catch like faces sinning
Against proportion—the wild strokes of nature

Which they hit off at once in the beginning,
Full of expression, right or wrong, that strike,
And pleasing or unpleasing, still are like.

LIII.

But she was a soft Landscape of mild earth,

Where all was harmony and calm and quiet,
Luxuriant, budding: cheerful without mirth,

Which if not happiness, is much more nigh it
Than are your mighty passions and so forth,

Which some call “ the sublime : ” I wish they'd try it:
I've seen your stormy seas and stormy women,
And pity lovers rather more than seamen.

LIV.

But she was pensive more than melancholy,
 And serious more than pensive, and serene,
 It may be, more than either—not unholy
 Her thoughts, at least till now, appear to have been
 The strangest thing was, beauteous, she was wholly
 Unconscious, albeit turned of quick seventeen,
 That she was fair, or dark, or short, or tall;
 She never thought about herself at all.

LV.

And therefore was she kind and gentle as
 The Age of Gold (when Gold was yet unknown,
 By which its nomenclature came to pass;
 Thus most appropriately has been shewn
 “*Lucus a non Lucendo*,” *not what was*,
 But what *was not*; a sort of style that’s grown
 Extremely common in this age, whose metal
 The Devil may decompose but never settle;

LVI.

I think it may be of “*Corinthian Brass*,”
 Which was a Mixture of all Metals, but
 The Brazen uppermost.) Kind reader! pass
 This long parenthesis: I could not shut
 It sooner for the soul of me, and class
 My faults even with your own! which meaneth, Put
 A kind construction upon them and me:
 But *that* you won’t—then don’t—I am not less free.

LVII.

'Tis time we should return to plain narration,
 And thus my narrative proceeds : Dudù,
 With every kindness short of ostentation,
 Shewed Juan, or Juanna, through and through
 This labyrinth of females, and each station
 Described—what's strange—in words extremely few;
 I have but one simile, and that's a blunder,
 For wordless woman, which is *silent* Thunder.

LVIII.

And next she gave her (I say *her*, because
 The Gender still was Epicene, at least
 In outward show, which is a saving clause)
 An outline of the Customs of the East,
 With' all their chaste integrity of laws,
 By which the more a Haram is encreased,
 The stricter doubtless grow the vestal duties
 Of any supernumerary beauties.

LIX.

And then she gave Juanna a chaste kiss :
 Dudù was fond of kissing—which I'm sure
 That nobody can ever take amiss,
 Because 'tis pleasant, so that it be pure,
 And between females means no more than this—
 That they have nothing better near, or newer.
 " Kiss" rhymes to " bliss" in fact as well as verse—
 I wish it never led to something worse.

LX.

In perfect Innocence she then unmade .
Her toilet, which cost little, for she was
A Child of Nature, carelessly arrayed :
If fond of a chance ogle at her glass,
'Twas like the Fawn which, in the lake displayed,
Beholds her own shy, shadowy image pass,
When first she starts, and then returns to peep,
Admiring this new Native of the deep.

LXI.

And one by one her articles of dress
Were laid aside ; but not before she offered
Her aid to fair Juanna, whose excess
Of Modesty declined the assistance proffered ;
Which past well off—as she could do no less ;
Though by this politesse she rather suffered,
Pricking her fingers with those cursed pins,
Which surely were invented for our sins,—

LXII.

Making a woman like a porcupine,
Not to be rashly touched. But still more dread,
Oh ye ! whose fate it is, as once 'twas mine,
In early youth, to turn a lady's maid ;—
I did my very boyish best to shine
In tricking her out for a masquerade :
The pins were placed sufficiently, but not
Stuck all exactly in the proper spot.

LXIII.

But these are foolish things to all the wise,
 And I love wisdom more than she loves me;
 My tendency is to philosophize
 On most things, from a tyrant to a tree;
 But still the spouseless Virgin *Knowledge* flies,
 What are we? and whence came we? what shall be
 Our *ultimate* existence? What's our present?
 Are questions answerless, and yet incessant.

LXIV.

There was deep silence in the chamber: dim
 And distant from each other burned the lights,
 And Slumber hovered o'er each lovely limb
 Of the fair occupants: if their be sprites,
 They should have walked there in their spriteliest trim,
 By way of change from their sepulchral sites,
 And shewn themselves as Ghosts of better taste
 Than haunting some old ruin or wild waste.

LXV.

Many and beautiful lay those around,
 Like flowers of different hue and clime and root,
 In some exotic garden sometimes found,
 With cost and care and warmth induced to shoot.
 One with her auburn tresses lightly bound,
 And fair brows gently drooping, as the fruit
 Nods from the tree, was slumbering with soft breath
 And lips apart, which shewed the pearls beneath.

LXVI.

One with her flushed cheek laid on her white arm,
And raven ringlets gathered in dark crowd
Above her brow, lay dreaming soft and warm ;
And smiling through her dream, as through a cloud
The Moon breaks, half unveiled each further charm,
As, slightly stirring in her snowy shroud,
Her beauties seized the unconscious hour of night
All bashfully to struggle into light.

LXVII.

This is no bull, although it sounds so : for
'Twas night, but there were lamps, as hath been said.
A third's all palid aspect offered more
The traits of sleeping Sorrow, and betrayed
Through the heaved breast the dream of some far shore
Beloved and deplored ; while slowly strayed
(As night dew, on a cypress glittering, tinges [fringes.
The black bough) tear-drops through her dark eyes' dark

LXVIII.

A fourth as marble, statue-like and still,
Lay in a breathless, hushed, and stony sleep ;
White, cold and pure, as looks a frozen rill,
Or the snow minaret on an Alpine steep,
Or Lot's wife done in salt,—or what you will ;—
My similes are gathered in a heap,
So pick and chuse—perhaps you'll be content
With a carved lady on a monument.

LXIX.

And lo ! a fifth appears ;—and what is she ?

A lady of “ a certain age,” which means
Certainly aged—what her years might be

I know not, never counting past their teens,
But there she slept, not quite so fair to see,

As ere that awful period intervenes
Which lays both men and women on the shelf,
To meditate upon their sins and self.

LXX.

But all this time how slept, or dreamed, Dudù ?

With strict enquiry I could ne’er discover,
And scorn to add a syllable untrue ;

But ere the middle watch was hardly over,
Just when the fading lamps waned dim and blue,

And phantoms hovered, or might seem to hover
To those who like their company, about
The apartment, on a sudden she screamed out :

LXXI.

And that so loudly, that upstartèd all

The Oda, in a general commotion :

Matron and maids, and those whom you may call

Neither, came crowding like the waves of ocean,
One on the other, throughout the whole hall,

All trembling, wondering, without the least notion,
More than I have myself, of what could make
The calm Dudù so turbulently wake.

LXXII.

But wide awake she was, and round her bed,
With floating draperies and with flying hair,
With eager eyes, and light but hurried tread,
And bosoms, arms, and ankles glancing bare,
And bright as any meteor ever bred
By the North Pole,—they sought her cause of care,
For she seemed agitated, flushed and frightened,
Her eye dilated and her colour heightened.

LXXIII.

But what is strange—and a strong proof how great
A blessing is sound sleep—Juanna lay
As fast as ever husband by his mate
In holy matrimony snores away.
Not all the clamour broke her happy state
Of slumber, ere they shook her,—so they say
At least,—and then she too unclosed her eyes,
And yawned a good deal with discreet surprise.

LXXIV.

And now commenced a strict investigation,
Which, as all spoke at once, and more than once
Conjecturing wondering, asking a narration,
Alike might puzzle either wit or dunce
To answer in a very clear oration.
Dudù had never passed for wanting sense,
But being “no orator as Brutus is,”
Could not at first expound what was amiss.

D

LXXV.

At length she said, that in a slumber sound,
She dreamed a dream, of walking in a wood—
A "wood obscure" like that where Dante found (1)
Himself in at the age when all grow good;
Life's half-way house, where dames with virtue crowned,
Run much less risk of lovers turning rude;
And that this wood was full of pleasant fruits,
And trees of goodly growth and spreading roots;

LXXVI.

And in the midst a golden apple grew,—
A most prodigious pippin—but it hung
Rather too high and distant; that she threw
Her glances on it, and then, longing, flung
Stones and whatever she could pick up, to
Bring down the fruit, which still perversely clung
To its own bough, and dangled yet in sight,
But always at a most provoking height;—

LXXVII.

That on a sudden, when she least had hope,
It fell down of its own accord, before
Her feet; that her first movement was to stoop
And pick it up, and bite it to the core;
That just as her young lip began to ope
Upon the golden fruit the vision bore,
A bee flew out and stung her to the heart,
And so—she awoke with a great scream and start.

LXXVIII.

All this she told with some confusion and
 'Dismay, the usual consequence of dreams
 Of the unpleasant-kind, with none at hand
 To expound their vain and visionary gleams.
 I've known some odd ones which seemed really planned
 Prophetically, or that which one deems
 "A strange coincidence," to use a phrase
 By which such things are settled now a days.

LXXIX.

The damsels, who had thoughts of some great harm,
 Began, as is the consequence of fear,
 To scold a little at the false alarm
 That broke for nothing on their sleeping ear.
 The matron too was wroth to leave her warm
 Bed for the dream she had been obliged to hear,
 And chafed at poor Dudù, who only sighed,
 And said, that she was sorry she had cried.

LXXX.

"I've heard of stories of a cock and bull ;
 "But visions of an apple and a bee,
 "To take us from our natural rest, and pull.
 "The whole Oda from their beds at half-past three
 "Would make us think the moon is at its full.
 "You surely are unwell, child ! we must see,
 "To-morrow, what His Highness's physician
 "Will say to this hysteric of a vision.

LXXXI.

“ And poor Juanna too ! the child’s first night
“ Within these walls, to be broke in upon
“ With such a clamour—I had thought it right
“ That the young stranger should not lie alone,
“ And as the quietest of all, she might
“ With you, Dudù, a good night’s rest have known ;
“ But now I must transfer her to the charge
“ Of Lolah—though her couch is not so large.”

LXXXII.

Lolah’s eyes sparkled at the proposition ;
But poor Dudù, with large drops in her own,
Resulting from the scolding or the vision,
Implored that present pardon might be shown
For this first fault, and that on no condition,
(She added in a soft and piteous tone)
Juanna should be taken from her, and
Her future dreams should all be kept in hand.

LXXXIII.

She promised never more to have a dream,
At least to dream so loudly as just now ;
She wondered at herself how she could scream—
’Twas foolish, nervous, as she must allow,
A fond hallucination, and a theme
For laughter—but she felt her spirits low,
And begged they would excuse her ; she’d get over
This weakness in a few hours, and recover.

LXXXIV.

And here Juanna kindly interposed;
And said she felt herself extremely well
Where she then was, as her sound sleep disclosed
When all around rang like a tocsin bell :
She did not find herself the least disposed
To quit her gentle partner, and to dwell
Apart from one who had no sin to show
Save that of dreaming once " mal-à-propos."

LXXXV.

As thus Juanna spoke, Dudù turned round
And hid her face within Juanna's breast ;
Her neck alone was seen, but that was found
The colour of a budding rose's crest.
I can't tell why she blushed, nor can expound
The mystery of this rupture of their rest ;
All that I know is, that the facts I state
Are true at truth has ever been of late.

LXXXVI.

And so good night to them,—or, if you will,
Good morrow—for the cock had crown, and light
Began to clothe each Asiatic hill,
And the mosque crescent struggled into sight
Of the long caravan, which in the chill
Of dewy dawn wound slowly round each height
That stretches to the stony belt, which girds
Asia, where Kafflooks down upon the Kurds.

LXXXVI.

With the first ray, or rather grey of morn,
Gulbeyaz rose from restlessness ; and pale
As Passion rises, with its bosom worn,
Arrayed herself with mantle, gem, and veil
The nightingale that sings with the deep thorn,
Which Fable places in her breast of Wail,
Is lighter far of heart and voice than those
Whose headlong passions form their proper woes.

LXXXVIII.

And that's the moral of this composition,
If people would but see its real drift ;—
But *that* they will not do without suspicion,
Because all gentle readers have the gift
Of closing 'gainst the light their orbs of vision :
While gentle writers also love to lift
Their voices 'gainst each other, which is natural,
The numbers are too great for them to flatter all.

LXXXIX.

Rose the Sultana from a bed of splendour,
Softer than the soft Sybarites's, who cried
Aloud because his feelings were too tender
To brook a ruffled rose-leaf by his side,—
So beautiful that art could little mend her,
Though pale with conflicts between love and pride :—
So agitated was she with her error,
She did not even look into the mirror.

XC.

Also arose about the self-same time,
Perhaps a little later, her great lord,
Master of thirty kingdoms so sublime,
And of a wife by whom he was abhorred ;
A thing of much less import in that clime—
At least to those of incomes which afford
The filling up their whole connubial cargo—
Than where two wives are under an embargo.

XCI.

He did not think much on the matter, nor,
Indeed on any other: as a man
He liked to have a handsome paramour
At hand, as one may like to have a fan,
And therefore of Circassians had good store,
As an amusement after the Divan ;
Though an unusual fit of love, or duty,
Had made him lately bask in his bride's beauty.

XCII.

And now he rose; and after due ablutions
Exacted by the customs of the East,
And prayers and other pious evolutions,
He drank six cups of coffee at the least,
And then withdrew to hear about the Russians
Whose victories had recently increased
In Catherine's reign, whom glory still adores
As greatest of all sovereigns and w——s.

XCIII.

But oh, thou grand legitimate Alexander !

Her son's son, let not this last phrase offend
Thine ear, if it should reach,—and now rhymes wander
Almost as far as Petersburg, and lend
A dreadful impulse to each loud meander
Of murmuring Liberty's wide waves, which blend
Their roar even with the Baltic's,—so you be
Your father's son, 'tis quite enough for me.

XCIV.

To call men love-begotten, or proclaim
Their mothers as the antipodes of Timon,
That hater of mankind, would be a shame,
A libel, or whate'er you please to rhyme on :
But people's ancestors are history's game ;
And if one lady's slip could leave a crime on
All generations, I should like to know
What pedigree the best would have to show ?

XCV.

Had Catherine and the Sultan understood
Their own true interests, which kings rarely know,
Until 'tis taught by lessons rather rude,
There was a way to end their strife, although
Perhaps precarious, had they but thought good,
Without the aid of Prince or Plenipo :
She to dismiss her guards and he his haram,
And for their other matters, meet and share 'em.

XCVI.

But as it was, his Highness had to hold
His daily council upon ways and means,
How to encounter with this martial scold,
This modern Amazon and Queen of Queens ;
And the perplexity could not be told
Of all the pillars of the state, which leans
Sometimes a little heavy on the backs
Of those who cannot lay on a new tax.

XCVII.

Meantime Gulbeyaz, when her King was gone,
Retired into her boudoir, a sweet place
For love or breakfast ; private, pleasing, lone,
And rich with all contrivances which grace
Those gay recesses :—many a precious stone
Sparkled along its roof, and many a vase
Of porcelain held in the fettered flowers,
Those captive soothers of a captive's hours.

XCVIII.

Mother of pearl, and porphyry, and marble,
Vied with each other on this costly spot ;
And singing birds without were heard to warble ;
And the stained glass which lighted this fair grot
Varied each ray :—but all descriptions garble
The true effect, and so we had better not
Be too minute ; an outline is the best,—
A lively reader's fancy does the rest.

XCIX.

And here she summoned Baba, and required
Don Juan at his hands, and information
Of what had past since all the slaves retired,
And whether he had occupied their station ;
If matters had been managed as desired,
And his disguise with due consideration
Kept up ; and above all, the where and how
He had passed the night, was what she wished to know.

C.

Baba, with some embarrassment, replied
To this long catechism of questions asked
More easily than answered,—that he had tried
His best to obey in what he had been tasked ;
But there seemed something that he wished to hide,
Which hesitation more betrayed than masqued ;—
He scratched his ear, the infallible resource
To which embarrassed people have recourse.

CI.

Gulbeyaz was no model of true patience,
Nor much disposed to wait in word or deed :
She liked quick answers in all conversations ;
And when she saw him stumbling like a steed
In his replies, she puzzled him for fresh ones ;
And as his speech grew still more broken-kneed,
Her cheek began to flush, her eyes to sparkle,
And her proud brow's blue veins to swell and darkle.

CII.

When Baba saw these symptoms, which he knew
To bode him no great good, he deprecated
Her anger, and beseech'd she'd hear him through—

He could not help the thing which he related;
Then out it came at length, that to Dudu

Juan was given in charge as hath been stated;
But not by Baba's fault, he said, and swore on
The holy camel's hump, besides the Koran.

CIII.

The chief dame of the Oda, upon whom

The discipline of the whole Haram bore,
As soon as they re-entered their own room,

For Baba's function stopt short at the door,
Had settled all; nor could he then presume

(The aforesaid Baba) just then to do more,
Without exciting such suspicion as
Might make the matter still worse than it was.

CIV.

He hoped, indeed he thought, he could be sure

Juan had not betrayed himself; in fact
'Twas certain that his conduct had been pure,
Because a foolish or imprudent act
Would not alone have made him insecure,

But ended in his being found out and *sacked*,
And thrown into the sea.—Thus Baba spoke
Of all save Dudu's dream, which was no joke.

CV.

This he discreetly kept in the back ground,
And talked away—and might have talked till now,
For any further answer that he found,
So deep an anguish wrung Gulbeyaz' brow ;
Her cheek turned ashes, ears wrung, brain whirled round
As if she had received a sudden blow,
And the heart's dew of pain sprang fast and chilly
O'er her fair front, like morning's on a lily.

CVI.

Although she was not of the fainting sort,
Baba thought she would faint, but there he erred—
It was but a convulsion, which though short
Can never be described ; we all have heard,
And some of us have felt thus "*all amort*,"
When things beyond the common have occurred ;—
Gulbeyaz proved in that deep agony
What she could ne'er express—then how should I ?

CVII.

She stood a moment as a Pythoness
Stands on her tripod, agonized, and full
Of Inspiration gathered from Distress.
When all the heart-strings like wild horses pull
The heart asunder ;—then, as more or less
Their speed abated or their strength grew dull,
She sunk down on her seat by slow degrees,
And bowed her throbbing head o'er trembling knees.

CVIII.

Her face declined and was unseen ; her hair
Fell in long tresses like the weeping willow,
Sweeping the marble underneath her chair,
Or rather sofa (for it was all pillow,
A low, soft Ottoman) and black Despair
Stirred up and down her bosom like a billow,
Which rushes to some shore whose shingles check
Its farther course, but must receive its wreck.

CIX.

Her head hung down, and her long hair in stooping
Concealed her features better than a veil ;
And one hand o'er the Ottoman lay drooping,
White, waxen, and as alabaster pale :
Would that I were a painter ! to be grouping
All that a poet drags into detail !
Oh that my words were colours ! but their tints
May serve perhaps as outlines or slight hints.

CX.

Baba, who knew by experience when to talk
And when to hold its tongue, now held it till
This passion might blow o'er, nor dared to balk
Gulbeyaz' taciturn or speaking will.
At length she rose up, and began to walk
Slowly along the room, but silent still,
And her brow cleared, but not her troubled eye ;
The Wind was down, but still the Sea ran high.

E

CXI.

She stopt, and raised her head to speak—but paused,
And then moved on again with rapid pace ;
Then slackened it, which is the march most caused
By deep Emotion :—you may sometimes trace
A feeling in each footstep, as disclosed
By Sallust in his Catiline, who, chased
By all the Demons of all Passions, showed
Their work even by the way in which he trode.

CXII.

Gulbeyaz stopped and beckoned Baba :—“ Slave !
“Bring the two slaves !” she said in a low tone,
But one which Baba did not like to brave,
And yet he shuddered, and seemed rather prone
To prove reluctant, and begged leave to crave
(Though he well knew the meaning) to be shown
What slaves her Highness wished to indicate,
For fear of any error, like the late.

CXIII.

“ The Georgian and her paramour,” replied
The Imperial Bride—and added, “ Let the boat
“ Be ready by the secret portal’s side :
“ You know the rest.” The words stuck in her throat
Despite her injured love and fiery pride ;
And of this Baba willingly took note,
And begged by every hair of Mahomet’s beard,
She would revoke the order he had heard.

CXIV.

"To hear is to obey," he said; "but still,
 "Sultana, think upon the consequence :
 "It is not that I shall not all fulfil
 "Your orders even in their severest sense ;
 "But such precipitation may end ill,
 "Even at your own imperative expence :
 "I do not mean destruction and exposure
 "In case of any premature disclosure ;

CXV.

"But your own feelings.—Even should all the rest
 "Be hidden by the rolling waves, which hide
 "Already many a once love-beaten breast
 "Deep in the caverns of the deadly tide—
 "You love this boyish, new, seraglio guest,
 "And if this violent remedy be tried—
 "Excuse my freedom, when I here assure you,
 "That killing him is not the way to cure you."

CXVI.

"What dost thou know of love or feeling?—wretch
 "Begone!" she cried, with kindling eyes—"And do
 "My bidding!" Baba vanished, for to stretch
 His own remonstrance further he well knew
 Might end in acting as his own "Jack Ketch ;"
 And though he wished extremely to get through
 This awkward business without harm to others,
 He still preferred his own neck to another's.

CXVII.

Away he went then upon his commission,
Growling and grumbling in good Turkish phrase
Against all women of whate'er condition,
Especially Sultanas, and their ways ;
Their obstinacy, pride, and indecision,
Their never knowing their own mind two days,
The trouble that they gave, their Immorality,
Which made him daily bless his own Neutrality.

CXVIII.

And then he called his brethren to his aid,
And sent one on a summons to the pair,
That they must instantly be well arrayed,
And above all be combed even to a hair,
And brought before the Empress, who had made
Enquiries after them with kindest care :
At which Dudù looked strange, and Juan silly ;
But go they must at once, and Will I—Nill I.

CXIX.

And here I leave them at their preparation
For the Imperial presence, wherein whether
Gulbeyaz shewed them both commiseration,
Or got rid of the parties altogether,
Like other angry ladies of her nation,—
Are things the turning of a hair or feather
May settle ; but far be't from me to anticipate
In what way feminine Caprice may dissipate.

CXX.

I leave them for the present with good wishes,
Though doubts of their well doing, to arrange
Another part of History; for the disbes
Of this our banquet we must sometimes change:
And trusting Juan may escape the fishes,
Although his situation now seems strange
And scarce secure, as such digressions *are* fair,
The Muse will take a little touch at warfare.

END OF CANTO VI.

NOTE TO CANTO SIX.

Note 1, page 26, stanza lxxv. line 3.

"Nel mezzo del' Cammin'di nostra vita
" Mi ritrovai per una Selva oscura," &c. &c.

DON JUAN.

CANTO VII.

I.

OH Love! O Glory! what are ye? who fly
Around us ever, rarely to alight:
There's not a meteor in the Polar sky
Of such transcendant and more fleeting flight.
Chill, and chained to cold earth, we lift on high
Our eyes in search of either lovely light;
A thousand and a thousand colours they
Assume, then leave us on our freezing way.

II.

And such as they are, such my present tale is,
A non-descript and ever-varying rhyme,
A versified Aurora Borealis,
Which flashes o'er a waste and icy clime.
When we know what all are, we must bewail us,
But ne'er the less I hope it is no crime
To laugh at *all* things: for I wish to know
What, after *all*, are *all* things—but a *Show*?

III.

They accuse me—*Me*—the present writer of
 The present poem, of—I know not what,—
 A tendency to under-rate and scoff
 At human power and virtue, and all that ;
 And this they say in language rather rough.
 Good God ! I wonder what they would be at !
 I say no more than has been said in Dante's
 Verse, and by Solomon and by Cervantes ;

IV.

By Swift, by Machiavel, by Rochefoucault,
 By Fenelon, by Luther, and by Plato ;
 By Tillotson, and Wesley, and Rousseau,
 Who knew this life was not worth a potato.
 'Tis not their fault, nor mine, if this be so—
 For my part I pretend not to be Cato,
 Nor even Diogenes—We live and die,
 But which is best, you know no more than I.

V.

Socrates said, our only knowledge was
 “ To know that nothing could be known ; ” a pleasant
 Science enough, which levels to an ass
 Each Man of Wisdom, future, past, or present.
 Newton (that Proverb of the Mind) alas !
 Declared, with all his grand discoveries recent,
 That he himself felt only “ like a youth
 “ Picking up shells by the great Ocean—Truth.”

VI.

Ecclesiastes said, that all is Vanity—

Most modern preachers say the same, or show it
By their examples of true Christianity ;

In short, all know, or very soon may know it.
And in this scene of all-confessed inanity,

By saint, by sage, by preacher, and by poet,
Must I restrain me, through the fear of strife,
From holding up the Nothingness of life ?

VII.

Dogs, or men ! (for I flatter you in saying

That ye are dogs—your betters far) ye may
Read, or read not, what I am now essaying

To show ye what ye are in every way.
As little as the Moon stops for the baying

Of Wolves, will the bright Muse withdraw one ray,
From out her skies—then howl your idle wrath !
While she still silvers o'er your gloomy path.

VIII.

“ Fierce loves and faithless wars ”—I am not sure

If this be the right reading—'tis no matter ;
The fact's about the same, I am secure ;—

I sing them both, and am about to batter
A town which did a famous siege endure,

And was beleaguer'd both by land and water
By Suvaroff, or anglicè Suwarrow,
Who loved blood as an Alderman loves marrow.

IX.

The Fortress is called Ismail, and is placed
Upon the Danube's left branch and left bank,
With buildings in the oriental taste,
But still a fortress of the foremost rank,
Or was at least, unless 'tis since defaced,
Which with your conquerors is a common prank :
It stands some eighty versts from the high sea,
And measures round of toises thousands three.

X.

Within the extent of this fortification
A Borough is comprized along the height
Upon the left, which from its loftier station
Commands the city, and upon its scite
A Greek had raised around this elevation
A quantity of palisades *upright*,
So placed as to *impede* the fire of those
Who held the place, and to *assist* the foe's.

XI.

This circumstance may serve to give a notion
Of the high talents of this new Vauban :
But the town ditch below was deep as ocean,
The rampart higher than you'd wish to hang :
But then there was a great want of precaution,
(Prithee, excuse this engineering slang)
Nor work advanced, nor covered way was there,
To hint as least "Here is no thoroughfare."

XII.

But a stone bastion, with a narrow gorge,
And walls as thick as most skulls born as yet;
Two batteries, cap-apèe, as our St. George,
Case-mated one, and t'other "a barbette,"
Of Danube's bank took formidable charge;
While two and twenty cannon duly set
Rose over the town's right side, in bristling tier,
Forty feet high, upon a cavalier.

XIII.

But from the river the town's open quite,
Because the Turks could never be persuaded
A Russian vessel o're would heave in sight;
And such their creed was, till they were invaded,
When it grew rather late to set things right.
But as the Danube could not well be waded,
They looked upon the Muscovite flotilla,
And only shouted, "Alla!" and "Bis Millah!"

XIV.

The Russians now were ready to attack;
But oh, ye Goddesses of war and glory.
How shall I spell the name of each Cossaque
Who were immortal, could one tell their story?
Alas! what to their memory can lack?
Achilles self was not more grim and gory
Than thousands of this new and polished nation,
Whose names want nothing but—pronunciation.

XV.

Still I'll record a few, if but to encrease

Our euphony—there was Strongenoff, and Strokonoff
Meknop, Serge Lwdw, Arseniew of Modern Greece,

And Tschitsshakoff, and Roguenoff, and Chokenoff,
And others of twelve consonants a piece ;

And more might be found out, if I could poke enough
Into gazettes ; but Fame (capricious strumpet)
It seems has got 'an ear as well as trumpet,

XVI.

And cannot tune those discords of narration,

Which may be names at Moscow, into rhyme,
Yet there were several worth commemoration,

As e'er was virgin of a nuptial chime ;
Soft words too, fitted for the peroration

Of Londonderry drawling against time,
Ending in " ischskin," " ousckin," " iffskchy," " ouski,"
Of whom we can insert but Rousamouski,—

XVII.

Scherematoff and Chrematoff, Koklophti,

Koclobski, Kourakin, and Mouskin Pouskin,
All proper men of weapons, as e'er scoffed high

Against a foe, or ran a sabre through skin :
Little cared they for Mahomet or Mufti,

Unless to make their kettle-drums a new skin
Out of their hides, if parchment had grown dear,
And no more handy substitute been near.

XVIII.

Then there were foreigners of much renown,
Of various nations, and all volunteers ;
Not fighting for their country or its crown,
But wishing to be one day brigadiers ;
Also to have the sacking of a town ;
A pleasant thing to young men at their years.
'Mongst them were several Englishmen of pith,
Sixteen called Thompson, and nineteen named Smith.

XIX.

Jack Thompson and Bill Thompson ;—all the rest
Had been called “ *Jemmy*,” after the great bard ;
I dont know whether they had arms or crest,
But such a godfather's as good a card.
Three of the Smiths were Peters ; but the best
Amongst them all, hard blows to inflict or ward,
Was *he*, since so renowned “ in country quarters
At Halifax ;” but now he served the Tartars.

XX.

The rest were Jacks and Gills and Wills and Bills ;
But when I've added that the elder Jack Smith
Was born in Cumberland among the hills,
And that his father was an honest blacksmith,
I've said all I know of a name that fills
Three lines of the dispatch in taking “ Schmacksmith,”
A village of Moldavia's waste, wherein
He fell, immortal in a bulletin.

F

XXI.

I wonder (although Mars no doubt's a God I
Praise) if a man's name in a *bulletin*
May make up for a *bullet* in his body ?

I hope this little question is no sin,
Because, though I am but a simple noddie,

I think one Shakespear puts the same thought in
The mouth of some one in his plays so doating,
Which many people pass for wits by quoting.

XXII.

Then there were Frenchmen, gallant, young and gay :

But I'm too great a patriot to record
Their Gallic names upon a glorious day ;

I'd rather tell ten lies than say a word
Of truth ;—such truths are treason : they betray

Their country, and as traitors are abhorred,
Who name the French in English, save to show
How Peace should make John Bull the Frenchman's foe.

XXIII.

The Russians, having built two batteries on
An Isle near Ismail, had two ends in view ;

The first was to bombard it, and knock down

The public buildings, and the private too,
No matter what poor souls might be undone.

The City's shape suggested this, 'tis true ;
Formed like an ampitheatre, each dwelling
Presented a fine mark to throw a shell in.

XXIV

The second object was to profit by

The moment of the general consternation,
To attack the Turk's flotilla, which lay nigh,
Extremely tranquil, anchored at its station :

But a third motive was as probably

To frighten them into capitulation ;
A phantasy which sometimes seizes warriors,
Unless they are game as Bull-dogs and Fox-terriers.

XXV.

A habit rather blameable, which is

That of despising those we combat with,
Common in many cases, was in this

The cause of killing Tchitchitzkoff and Smith :
One of the valourous " Smith " whom we shall miss
Out of those nineteen who late rhymed to " pith ; "
But 'tis a name so spread o'er " Sir " and " Madam."
That one would think the FIRST who bore it " ABAM."

XXVI.

The Russian batteries were incomplete,

Because they were constructed in a hurry.
Thus the same cause which makes a verse want feet,
And throws a cloud o'er Longman and John Murray,
When the sale of new books is not so fleet

As they who print them think is necessary,
May likewise put off for a time what story
Sometimes calls " murder," and at others " glory."

XXVII.

Whether it was their engineer's stupidity,
Their haste, or waste, I neither know nor care,
Or some contractor's personal cupidity,
Saving his soul by cheating in the ware
Of homicide ; but there was no solidity
In the new batteries erected there ;
They either missed, or they were never missed,
And added greatly to the missing list.

XXVIII.

A sad miscalculation about distance
Made all their naval matters incorrect ;
Three fireships lost their amiable existence
Before they reached a spot to take effect ;
The match was lit too soon, and no assistance
Could remedy this lubberly defect ;
They blew up in the middle of the river,
While, though 'twas dawn, the Turks slept fast as ever.

XXIX.

At seven they rose however, and surveyed
The Russ flotilla getting under way.
'Twas nine, when still advancing undismayed,
Within a cable's length their vessels lay
Off Ismail, and commenced a cannonade,
Which was returned with interest, I may say,
And by a fire of musquetry and grape
And shells and shot of every size and shape.

XXX.

For six hours bore they without intermission
 The Turkish fire ; and, aided by their own
 Land batteries, worked their guns with great precision :
 At length they found mere cannonade alone
 By no means would produce the town's submission,
 And made a signal to retreat at once.
 One bark blew up, a second near the works
 Running aground, was taken by the Turks.

XXXI.

The Moslem too had lost both ships and men ;
 But when they saw the enemy retire,
 Their Delhis manned some boats, and sailed again
 And galled the Russians with a heavy fire,
 And tried to make a landing on the main.
 But here the effect fell short of their desire :
 Count Damas drove them back into the water
 Pell mell, and with a whole gazette of slaughter.

XXXII.

" If" (says the historian here) " I could report
 " All that the Russians did upon this day,
 " I think that several volumes would fall short
 " And I should still have many things to say ;"
 And so he says no more—but pays his court
 To some distinguished strangers in that fray,
 The Prince de Ligne, and Langeron, and Damas,
 Names great as any that the roll of fame has.

XXXIII.

This being the case, may show us what fame is :

For out of these three "*preux Chevaliers*," how
Many of common readers give a guess

That such existed ? (and they may live now
For ought we know.) Renown's all hit or miss ;

There's Fortune even in Fame, we must allow.
'Tis true, the Memoirs of the Prince de Ligne
Have half withdrawn from *him* oblivion's screech,

XXXIV.

But here are men who fought in gallant actions

As gallantly as ever heroes fought,

But buried in the heap of such transactions—

Their names are rarely found, nor often sought.
Thus even good-Fame may suffer sad contractions,

And is extinguished sooner than she ought :
Of all our modern battles, I will bet
You can't repeat nine names from each Gazette.

XXXV.

In short, this last attack, though rich in glory,

Shewed that *somewhere, somehow*, there was a fault ;
And Admiral Ribas (known in Russian story)

Most strongly recommended an assault ;
In which he was opposed by young and hoary,
Which made a long debate :—but I must halt ;

For if I wrote down every warrior's speech,
I doubt few readers ere would mount the breach.

XXXVI.

There was a man, if that he was a man,—

Not that his manhood could be called in question,
For had he not been Hercules, his span

Had been as short in youth as indigestion
Made his last illness, when, all worn and wan,

He died beneath a tree, as much unblest on
The soil of the green province he had wasted,
As ere was locust on the land it blasted;

XXXVII.

This was Potemkin—a great thing in days

When homicide and harlotry made great;
If stars and titles could entail long praise,

His glory might half equal his estate.
This fellow, being six foot high, could raise

A kind of phantasy proportionate
In the then Sovereign of the Russian people,
Who measured men as you would do a steeple.

XXXVIII.

While things were in abeyance, Ribas sent

A courier to the Prince, and he succeeded
In ordering matters after his own bent.

I cannot tell the way in which he pleaded,
But shortly he had cause to be content.

In the mean time the batteries proceeded,
And fourscore cannon on the Danube's border
Were briskly fired and answered in due order.

XXXIX.

But on the thirteenth, when already part
Of the troops were embarked, the siege to raise,
A courier on the spur inspired new heart
Into all panthers for newspaper praise,
As well as dilettanti in war's art,
By his dispatches couched in pithy praise,
Announcing the appointment of that lover of
Battles, to the command, Field Marshal Souvaroff.

XL.

The letter of the Prince to the same Marshal
Was worthy of a Spartan, had the cause
Been one to which a good heart could be partial,
Defence of freedom, country, or laws ;
But as it was mere lust of power to o'er-arch all
With its proud brow, it merits slight applause,
Save for its style, which said, all in a trice,
" You will take Ismail at whatever price."

XLI.

" Let there be light ! said God, and there was light !"
" Let there be blood !" says man, and there's a sea !
The fiat of this spoiled Child of the Night
(For day ne'er saw his merits) could decree
More evil in an hour, than thirty bright
Summers could renovate, though they should be
Lovely as those which ripened Eden's fruit,
For war cuts up not only branch, but root.

XLII.

Our friends the Turks, who with loud "Allas" now
Began to signalize the Russ retreat,
Were damnably mistaken ; few are slow
In thinking that their enemy is beat,
(Or *beaten*, if you insist on grammar, though
I never think about it in a heat ;)
But here I say the Turks were much mistaken,
Who, hating hogs, yet wished to save their bacon.

XLIII.

For, on the sixteenth, at full gallop, drew
In sight two horsemen, who were deemed Cossacques
For some time, till they came in nearer view.
They had but little baggage on their backs,
For there were but *three* shirts between the two ;
But on they rode upon two Ukraine hacks,
Till, in approaching, were at length descried
In this plain pair, Suwarrow and his guide.

XLIV.

"Great joy to London now !" says some great fool
When London had a grand illumination,
Which to that bottle-conjuror, John Bull,
Is of all dreams the first hallucination ;
So that the streets of coloured lamps are full,
That Sage (*said* John) surrenders at discretion
His purse, his soul, his sense, and even his nonsense,
To gratify, like a huge moth, this *one* sense.

XLV.

"Tis strange that he should further "dama his eyes,"

For they are damned: that once all famous oath
Is to the devil now no further prize,

Since John has lately lost the use of both.
Debt he calls wealth, and taxes, Paradise :

And famine, with her gaunt and bony growth,
Which stare him in the face, he wont examine,
Or swears that Ceres hath begotten famine.

XLVI.

But to the tale. Great joy unto the camp !

To Russian, Tartar, English, French, Cossacque,
O'er whom Suwarrow shone like a gas lamp,

Presaging a most luminous attack,
Or like a wisp along the marsh so damp,
Which leads beholders on a boggy walk ;

He fitted to and fro, a dancing Light,
Which all who saw it followed, wrong or right

XLVII.

But certes matters took a different face :

There was enthusiasm and much applause,
The fleet and camp saluted with great face,

And all presaged Good fortune to their cause.
Within a cannon-shot length of the place

They drew, constructed ladders, repaired flaws
In former works, made new, prepared fascines,
And all kinds of benevolent machines.

XLVIII.

'Tis thus the spirit of a single mind
Makes that of multitudes take one direction.
As roll the waters to the breathing wind,
Or roams the herd beneath the bull's protection ;
Or as a little dog will lead the blind,
Or a bell-wether form the flock's connection
By tinkling sounds, when they go forth to victual ;
Such is the sway of your great men o'er little.

XLIX.

The whole camp rung with joy ; you would have thought
That they were going to a marriage feast :
(This metaphor, I think, holds good as aught,
Since there is discord after both at least.)
There was not now a luggage boy but sought
Danger and spoil with ardour much increased ;
And why ? because a little, odd, old man,
Stript to his shirt, was come to lead the van.

L.

But so it was ; and every preparation
Was made with all alacrity : the first
Detachment of three columns took its station,
And waited but the signal's voice to burst
Upon the foe : the second's ordination
Was also in three columns, with a thirst
For Glory gaping o'er a sea of slaughter :
The third, in columns two, attacked by water.

LI.

New batteries were erected ; and was held
A general council, in which Unanimity,
That stranger to most councils, here prevailed,
As sometimes happens in a great extremity :
And every difficulty being dispelled,
Glory began to dawn with due Sublimity,
While Souvaroff, determined to obtain it,
Was teaching his recruits to use the bayonet. (1)

LII.

It is an actual fact, that he, Commander
In chief, in proper person deigned to drill
The awkward squad, and could afford to squander
His time a corporal's duty to fulfil ;
Just as you'd break a sucking salamander,
To swallow flame, and never take it ill :
He showed them how to mount a ladder (which
Was not like Jacob's) or to cross a ditch.

LIII.

Also he dressed up, for the nonce, fascines
Like men with turbans, scimitars, and dirks,
And made them charge with bayonet these machines,
By way of lesson against actual Turks ;
And when well practised in these mimic scenes,
He judged them proper to assail the works ;
At which your wise men sneered in phrases witty :—
He made no answer ; but he took the city.

LIV.

Most things were in this posture on the eve
Of the assault, and all the camp was in
A stern repose ; which you would scarce conceive ;
Yet men resolved to dash through thick and thin
Are very silent when they once believe
That all is settled :—there was little din,
For some were thinking of their home and friends,
And others of themselves and latter ends.

LV.

Suwarrow chiefly was on the alert,
Surveying, drilling, ordering, jesting, pondering.
For the man was, we safely may assert,
A thing to wonder at beyond most wondering ;
Hero, buffoon, half-demon and half-dirt,
Praying, instructing, desolating, plundering ;
Now Mars, now Momus ; and when bent to storm
A fortress, Harlequin in uniform.

LVI.

The day before the assault, while upon drill—
For this great Conquerer played the corporal—
Some Cossacques, hovering like hawks round a hill,
Had met a party towards the twilight's fall,
One of whom spoke their tongue—or well or ill,
'Twas much that he was understood at all ;
But whether from his voice, or speech, or manner,
They found that he had fought beneath their banner.

G

LVII.

Whereon immediately at his request

They brought him and his comrades to head quarters :
Their dress was Moslem, but you might have guessed

That these were merely masquerading Tartars,
And that beneath each Turkish fashioned vest

Lurked Christianity ; which sometimes barbers
Her inward grace for outward show, and makes
It difficult to shun some strange mistakes.

LVIII.

Suwarrow, who was standing in his shirt

Before a company of Calmucks, drilling,
Exclaiming, fooling, swearing at the inert,

And lecturing on the noble art of killing,—
For deeming human clay but common dirt,

This great philosopher was thus instilling
His maxims, which to martial comprehension
Proved death in battle equal to a pension ;—

LIX.

Suwarrow, when he saw his company

Of Cossacques and their prey, turned round and cast
Upon them his slow brow and piercing eye :—

“ Whence come ye ? ” — “ From Constantinople last,
“ Captives just now escaped,” was the reply.

“ What are ye ? ” — “ What you see us.” Briefly past
This dialogue ; for he who answered knew
To whom he spoke, and made his words but few.

LX.

- “Your names?”—“Mine’s Johnson, and my comrade’s
 “The other two are women, and the third [Juan,
 “Is neither man nor woman.” The Chief threw on
 The party a slight glance, then said: “I have heard
 “Your name before, the second is a new one:
 “To bring the other three here was absurd;
 “But let that pass;—I think I have heard your name
 “In the Nikolaiew regiment?”—“The same.”

LXI.

[attack?”

- “You served at Widin?”—“Yes.”—“You led the
 “I did.”—“What next?”—“I really hardly know.”
 “You were the first i’ the breach?”—“I was not slack
 “At least to follow those who might be so.”
 “What followed?”—“A shot laid me on my back,
 “And I became a prisoner to the foe.”—
 “You shall have vengeance, for the town surrounded
 “Is twice as strong as that where you were wounded.

LXII.

[“I know

- “Where will you serve?”—“Where’er you please.”—
 “You like to be the hope of the forlorn,
 “And doubtless would be foremost on the foe
 “After the hardships you’ve already borne.
 “And this young fellow? say what can he do,
 “He with the beardless chin and garments torn?”
 “Why, General, if he hath no greater fault
 “In war than love, he had better lead the assault.”

LXIII.

"He shall if that he dare." Here Juan bowed
Low as the compliment deserved. Suwarrow
Continued: "Your old regiment's allowed,
"By special Providence, to lead to-morrow,
"Or it may be to-night, the assault: I have vowed
"To several saints, that shortly plough or harrow
"Shall pass o'er what was Ismail, and its tusk
"Be unimpeded by the proudest Mosque.

LXIV.

"So now, my lads, for Glory!"—Here he turned
And drilled away in the most classic Russian,
Until each high heroic bosom burned
For cash and conquest, as if from a cushion
A preacher had held forth (who nobly spurned
All earthly goods save tithes) and bade them push on
To slay the Pagans who resisted, battering
The armies of the Christian Empress Catherine.

LXV.

Johnson, who knew by this long colloquy
Himself a favourite, ventured to address
Suwarrow, though engaged with accents high
In his resumed amusement. "I confess
"My debt in being thus allowed to die
"Among the foremost; but if you'd express
"Explicitly our several posts, my friend
"And self would know what duty to attend."

LXVI.

" Right ! I was busy, and forgot. Why, you
 " Will join your former regiment, which should be
 " Now under arms. Ho ! Katskoff, take him to—
 " (Here he called up a Polish orderly)
 " His post, I mean the regiment Nikolaiew.
 " The stranger stripping may remain with me ;
 " He's a fine boy. The women may be sent
 " To the other baggage, or to the sick tent."

LXVII.

But here a sort of scene began to ensue :

The ladies, who by no means had been bred
 To be disposed of in away so new,
 Although their haram education led
 Doubtless to that of doctrines the most true,
 Passive obedience,—now raised up the head,
 With flashing eyes and starting tears, and flung
 Their arms, as hens their wings about their young,

LXVIII.

O'er the promoted couple of brave men
 Who were thus honoured by the greatest Chief
 That ever peopled hell with heroes slain,
 Or plunged a province or a realm in grief.
 Oh, foolish mortals ! Always taught in vain !
 Oh, glorious laurel ! since for one sole leaf
 Of thine imaginary deathless tree,
 Of blood and tears must flow the unebbing sea.

LXIX.

Suwarrow, who had small regard for tears,

And not much sympathy for blood, surveyed

The women with their hair about their ears

And natural agonies, with a slight shade

Of feeling : for however habit sears

Men's hearts against whole millions, when their trade

Is butchery, sometimes a single sorrow

Will touch even Heroes—and such was Suwarrow.

LXX.

He said,—and in the kindest Calmuck tone,—

“ Why, Johnson, what the devil do you mean

“ By bringing women here ? They shall be shown

“ All the attention possible, and seen

“ In safety to the waggons, where alone

“ In fact they can be safe. You should have been

“ Aware this kind of baggage never thrives :

“ Save wed a year, I hate recruits with wives.”

LXXI.

“ May it please your Excellency,” thus replied

Our British friend, “ these are the wives of others,

“ And not our own. I am too qualified

“ By service with my military brothers,

“ To break the rules by bringing one's own bride

“ Into a camp : I know that nought so bothers

“ The hearts of the heroic on a charge,

“ As leaving a small family at large.

LXXII.

" But these are but two Turkish ladies, who
" With their attendants aided our escape,
" And afterwards accompanied us through
" A thousand perils in this dubious shape.
" To me this kind of life is not so new;
" To them, poor things, it is an awkward step :
" I therefore, if you wish me to flight freely,
" Request that they may both be used genteelly."

LXXIII.

Meantime these two poor girls, with swimming eyes,
Looked on as if in doubt if they could trust
Their own protectors ;—nor was their surprise
Less than their grief (and truly not less just)
To see an old man, rather wild than wise
In aspect, plainly clad, besmeared with dust,
Stript to his waistcoat, and *that not* too clean,
More feared than all the Sultans ever seen.

LXXIV.

For every thing seemed resting on his nod,
As they could read in all eyes. Now to them,
Who were accustomed, as a sort of God,
To see the Sultan, rich in many a gem,
Like an imperial Peacock stalk abroad,
(That royal bird, whose tail's a diadem)
With all the Pomp of Power, it was a doubt
How Power could condescend to do without.

LXXV.

John Johnson, seeing their extreme dismay,
Though little versed in feelings Oriental,
Suggested some slight comfort in his way.

Don Juan, who was much more sentimental,
Swore they should see him by the dawn of day,
Or that the Russian army should repent all :
And, strange to say, they found some consolation
In this—for females like exaggeration.

LXXVI.

And then with tears, and sighs, and some slight kisses,
They parted for the present—these to await,
According to the artillery's hits or misses,
What Sages call Chance, Providence, or Fate—
(Uncertainty is one of many blisses,
A mortgage on Humanity's estate)—
While their beloved friends began to arm,
To burn a town which never did them harm.

LXXVII.

Suwarrow,—who but saw things in the gross,
Being much too gross to see them in detail,
Who calculated life as so much dross,
And as the wind a widowed nation's wail.
And cared as little for his army's loss,
(So that their efforts should at length prevail)
As wife and friends did for the boils of Job,—
What was't to him, to hear two women sob ?

LXXVIII.

Nothing.—The work of Glory still went on

In preparations for a cannonade

As terrible as that of Ilion,

If Homer had found mortars ready made ;

But now, instead of slaying Priam's son,

We only can but talk of escalade, [lets ;

Bombs, drums, guns, bastions, batteries, bayonets, bul-

Hard words, which stick in the soft Muses' gullets.

LXXIX.

Oh thou eternal Homer ! who couldst charm

All ears, though long ; all ages, though so short,

By merely wielding with poetic arm

Arms to which men will never more resort,

Unless gunpowder should be found to harm

Much less than is the hope of every Court,

Which now is leagued young Freedom to annoy ;

But they will not find Liberty a Troy :—

LXXX.

Oh thou eternal Homer ! I have now

To paint a siege, wherein more men were slain,

With deadlier engines and a speedier blow,

Than in thy Greek gazette of that campaign ;

And yet, like all men else, I must allow,

To vie with thee would be about as vain

As for a brook to cope with Ocean's flood ;

But still we Moderns equal you in blood ;

LXXXI.

If not in poetry, at least in fact ;
 And fact is truth, the great desideratum !
 Of which, howe'er the Muse describes each act,
 There should be ne'ertheless a slight substratum.
 But now the town is going to be attacked ;
 Great deeds are doing—how shall I relate 'em ?
 Souls of immortal generals ! Phœbus watches
 To colour up his rays from your dispatches.

LXXXII.

Oh ! ye great bulletins of Bonaparte !
 Oh ! ye less grand long lists of killed and wounded !
 Shade of Leonidas, who fought so hearty,
 When my poor Greece was once, as now, surrounded !
 Oh, Cæsar's Commentaries ! now impart ye,
 Shadows of glory ! (lest I be confounded)
 A portion of your fading, twilight hues,
 So beautiful, so fleeting, to the Muse.

LXXXIII.

When I call "fading" martial immortality,
 I mean, that every age and every year,
 And almost every day, in sad reality,
 Some sucking hero is compelled to rear,
 Who, when we come to sum up the totality
 Of deeds to human happiness most dear,
 Turns out to be a butcher in great business,
 Afflicting young folks with a sort of dizziness.

LXXXIV.

Medals, ranks, ribbons, lace, embroidery, scarlet,
Are things immortal to immortal man,
As purple to the Babalonian harlot :
An uniform to boys is like a fan
To women ; there is scarce a crimson varlet
But deems himself the first in Glory's van.
But Glory's Glory ; and if you would find
What that is—ask the pig who sees the wind !

LXXXV.

At least *he feels it*, and some say he *sees*,
Because he runs before it like a pig ;
Or if that simple sentence should displease,
Say that he scuds before it like a brig,
A schooner, or—but it is time to ease
This Canto, ere my Muse perceives fatigue.
The next shall ring a peal to shake all people,
Like a bob-major from a village steeple.

LXXXVI.

Hark ! through the silence of the cold, dull night,
The hum of armies gathering rank on rank !
Lo ! dusky masses steal in dubious sight
Along the leagured wall and bristling bank
Of the armed river, while with straggling light
The stars peep through the vapours dim and dank
Which curl in curious wreaths—How soon the smoke
Of Hell shall pall them in a deeper cloak !

LXXXVII.

Here pause we for the present—as even then
That awful pause, dividing life from death,
Struck for an instant on the hearts of men,
Thousands of whom were drawing their last breath !
A moment—and all will be life again !
The march ! the charge ! the shouts of either faith !
Hurra ; and Allah ! and—one moment more—
The Death-cry drowning in the battle's roar.

END OF CANTO VII.

NOTE TO CANTO SEVEN.

Note 1, Page 60, stanza li. line 8.

Fact: Bowaroff did this in person.

DON JUAN.

CANTO VIII.

I.

On blood and thunder ! and oh blood and wounds !

These are but vulgar oaths, as you may deem
Too gentle reader ! and most shocking sounds ;

And so they are ; yet this is Glory's dream
Unriddled, and as my true muse expounds

At present such things, since they are her theme,
So be they her inspirers ! Call them Mars,
Bellona, what you will—they mean but wars.

II.

All was prepared—the fire, the sword, the men

To wield them in their terrible array,
The army, like a lion from his den,

Marched forth with nerve and sinews bent to slay,—
A human Hydra, issuing from its fen

To breathe destruction on its winding way,
Whose heads were heroes, which cut off in vain
Immediately in others grew again.

H

III.

History can only take things in the gross ;

But could we know them in detail, perchance
In balancing the profit and the loss,

War's merit it by no means might enhance,
To waste so much gold for a little dross,

As hath been done, mere conquest to advance,
The drying up a single tear has more
Of honest fame, than shedding seas of gore.

IV.

And why ? because it brings self-approbation ;

Whereas the other, after all its glare,
Shouts, bridges, arches, pensions from a nation,
Which (it may be) has not much left to spare,
A higher title, or a loftier station,

Though they may make Corruption gape or stare,
Yet, in the end, except in freedom's battles,
Are nothing but a child of murder's rattles.

V.

And such they are—and such they will be found.

Not so Leonidas and Washington,
Whose every battle-field is holy ground,

Which breathes of nations saved, not worlds undone,
How sweetly on the ear such echoes sound !

While the mere victor's may appal or stun
The servile and the vain, such names will be
A watchword till the Future shall be free.

VI.

The night was dark, and the thick mist allowed
 Nought to be seen save the artillery's flame,
 Which arched the horizon like a fiery cloud,
 And in the Danube's waters shone the same,
 A mirrored Hell ! The volleying roar, and loud
 Long booming of each peal on peal, o'creame
 The ear far more than thunder ; for Heaven's flashes
 Spare, or smite rarely.—Man's make millions ashes !

VII.

The column ordered on the assault, scarce passed
 Beyond the Russian batteries a few toises,
 When up the bristling Moslem rose at last,
 Answering the Christian thunders with like voices ;
 Then one vast fire, air, earth, and stream embraced,
 Which rock'd as 'twere beneath the mighty noises ;
 While the whole rampart blazed like Etna, when
 The restless Titan hiccups in his den.

VIII.

And one enormous shout of " Allah ! " rose
 In the same moment, loud as even the roar
 Of war's most mortal engines, to their foes
 Hurling defiance : city, stream, and shore
 Resounded " Allah ! " and the clouds which close
 With thickening canopy the conflict o'er,
 Vibrate to the Eternal name. Hark ! through
 All sounds it pierceth, " Allah ! Allah ! Hu ! " (1)

H 2

IX.

The columns were in movement one and all,

But of the portion which attacked by water,
Thicker than leaves the lives began to fall,

Though led by Arseniew, that great son of slaughter,
As brave as ever faced both bomb and ball.

"Carnage" (so Wordsworth tells you) is God's daughter
If he speaks truth, she is Christ's sister, and [ter : (2)
Just now behaved as in the Holy Land.

X.

The Prince de Ligne was wounded in the knee ;

Count Chapeau-Bras too had a ball between
His cap and head, which proves the head to be

Aristocratic as was ever seen,
Because it then received no injury

More than the cap ; in fact the ball could mean
No harm unto a right legitimate head :

"Ashes to ashes"—why not, lead to lead ?

XI.

Also the General Markow, Brigadier,

Insisting on removal of *the Prince*
Amidst some groaning thousands dying near,—

All common fellows, who might writhe and wince
And shriek for water into a deaf ear,—

The General Markow, who could thus evince
His sympathy for rank, by the same token,
To teach him greater, had his own leg broken.

XII.

Three hundred cannon threw up their emetic,
 And thirty thousand musquets flung their pills
 Like hail, to make a bloody diuretic.

Mortality ! thou hast thy monthly bills ;
 Thy Plagues, thy Famines, thy Physicians, yet tick,
 Like the death-watch, within our ears the ills
 Past, present, and to come ;—but all may yield
 To the true portrait of one battle-field.

XIII.

There the still varying pangs, which multiply
 Until their very number makes men hard
 By the infinities of agony,
 Which meet the gaze, whate'er it may regard—
 The groan, the roll in dust, the all-white eye
 Turned back within its socket,—these reward
 Your rank and file by thousands, while the rest
 May win perhaps a ribbon at the breast !

XIV.

Yet I love Glory ;—glory's a great thing ;—
 Think what it is to be in your old age
 Maintained at the expence of your good king :—
 A moderate pension shakes full many a sage,
 And heroes are but made for bards to sing,
 Which is still better ; thus in verse to wage
 Your wars eternally, besides enjoying
 Half-pay for life, make mankind worth destroying.

XV.

The troops, already disembarked, pushed on
To take a battery on the right ; the others,
Who landed lower down, their landing done,
Had set to work as briskly as their brothers
Being grenadiers they mounted one by one,
Cheerful as children climb the breasts of mothers,
O'er the entrenchment and the palisade,
Quite orderly, as if upon parade.

XVI.

And this was admirable ; for so hot
The fire was, that were red Vesuvius loaded,
Besides its lava, with all sorts of shot
And shells or hells, it could not more have goaded.
Of officers a third fell on the spot,
A thing which victory by no means boded
To gentlemen engaged in the assault :
Hounds, when the huntsman tumbles, are at fault.

XVII.

But here I leave the general concern,
To track our hero on his path of fame ;
He must his laurels separately earn ;
For fifty thousand heroes, name by name,
Though all deserving equally to turn
A couplet, or an elegy to claim,
Would form a lengthy lexicon of glory,
And what is worse still, a much longer story :

XVIII.

And therefore we must give the greater number
To the Gazette—which doubtless fairly dealt
By the deceased, who lie in famous slumber
In ditches, fields, or wheresoe'er they felt
Their clay for the last time their souls encumber ;—
Thrice happy he whose name has been well spelt
In the dispatch : I knew a man whose ~~loss~~
Was printed *Grove*, although his name was *Grose*. (3)

XIX.

Juan and Johnson joined a certain corps,
And fought away with might and main, not knowing
The way which they had never trod before.
And still less guessing where they might be going ;
But on they marched, dead bodies trampling o'er,
Fifing, and thrusting, slashing, sweating, glowing,
But fighting thoughtlessly enough to win,
To their *two* selves, *one* whole bright bulletin.

XX.

Thus on they wallowed in the bloody mire
Of dead and dying thousands,—sometimes gaining
A yard or two of ground, which brought them nigher
To some odd angle for which all were straining ;
At other times, repulsed by the close fire,
Which really poured as if all Hell were raining,
Instead of Heaven, they stumbled backwards o'er
A wounded comrade, sprawling in his gore.

XXI.

Though 'twas Don Juan's first of fields, and though
 The nightly muster and the silent march
 In the chill dark, when Courage does not glow
 So much as under a triumphal arch,
 Perhaps might make him shiver, yawn, or throw
 A glance on the dull clouds (as thick as starch,
 Which stiffened heaven) as if he wished for day;—
 Yet for all this he did not run away.

XXII.

Indeed he could not. But what if he had?
 There *have been* and *are* heroes who begun
 With something not much better or as bad:
 Frederick the Great from Molwitz deigned to run,
 For the first and last time; for, like a pad,
 Or hawk, or bride, most mortals after one
 Warm bout are broken into their new tricks,
 And fight like fiends for pay or politics.

XXIII.

He was what Erin calls, in her sublime
 Old Erse or Irish, or it may be *Punic*;—
 (The Antiquarians who can settle Time,
 Which settles all things, Roman, Greek or Runic,
 Swear that Pat's language sprung from the same clime
 With Hannibal, and wears the Tyrian tunic
 Of Dido's alphabet; and this is rational
 As any other notion, and not national;)—(4)

XXIV.

But Juan was quite "a broth of a boy,"
A thing of impulse and a child of song ;
Now swimming in the sentiment of joy,
Or the *sensation* (if that phrase seem wrong)
And afterwards, if he must needs destroy,
In such good company as always throng
To battles, sieges, and that kind of pleasure,
No less delighted to employ his leisure.

XXV.

But always without malice ; if he warr'd
Or loved, it was with what we call " the best
Intentions," which form all mankind's *trump card*
To be produced when brought up to the test.
The statesman, hero, harlot, lawyer—ward
Off each attack, when people are in quest
Of their designs, by saying they *meant well* ;
'Tis pity " that such meanings should pave Hell." (5)

XXVI.

I almost lately have begun to doubt
Whether Hell's pavement—if it be *so paved*—
Must not have latterly been quite worn out,
Not by the numbers good Intent hath saved,
But by the mass who go below without
Those antient good intentions, which once shaved
And smoothed the brimstone of that street of Hell
Which bears the greatest likeness to Pall Mall.

XXVII.

Juan, by some strange chance, which oft divides
Warrior from warrior in their grim career,
Like chastest wives from constant husbands' sides
Just at the close of the first bridal year,
By one of those odd turns of Fortune's tides,
Was on a sudden rather puzzled here,
When, after a good deal of heavy firing.
He found himself alone, and friends retiring.

XXVIII.

I don't know how the thing occurred—it might
Be that the greater part were killed or wounded,
And that the rest had faced unto the right
About ; a circumstance which has confounded
Cæsar himself, who in the very sight
Of his whole army, which so much abounded
In courage, was obliged to snatch a shield
And rally back his Romans to the field.

XXIX.

Juan, who had no shield to snatch, and was
No Cæsar, but a fine young lad, who fought
He knew not why, arriving at this pass,
Sopped for a minute, as perhaps he ought
For a much longer time ; then, like an ass
(Start not, kind reader, since great Homer thought
This simile enough for Ajax, Juan
Perhaps may find it better than a new one):

XXX.

Then, like an ass, he went upon his way,
 And, what was stranger, never looked behind;
 But seeing, flashing forward, like the day
 Over the hills, a fire enough to blind
 Those who dislike to look upon a fray,
 He stumbled on, to try if he could find
 A path to add his own slight arm and forces
 To corps, the greater part of which were corpses:

XXI.

Perceiving then no more the commandant
 Of his own corps, nor even the corps which had
 Quite disappeared—the Gods know how! (I can't
 Account for every thing which may look bad
 In history; but we at least may grant
 It was not marvellous that a mere lad
 In search of glory, should look on before,
 Nor care a pinch of snuff about his corps:)—

XXXII.

Perceiving nor commander nor commanded,
 And left at large, like a young heir, to make
 His way to—where he knew not—single handed;
 As travellers follow over bog and brake
 An "Ignis fatuus;" or as sailors stranded
 Unto the nearest hut themselves betake,
 So Juan, following honour and his nose,
 Rushed where the thickest fire announced most foes.

XXXIII.

He knew not where he was, nor greatly cared,
For he was dizzy, busy, and his veins
Filled with lightning—for his Spirit shared
The hour, as is the case with lively brains ;
And where the hottest fire was seen and heard,
And the loud cannon pealed his hoarsest strains,
He rushed, while Earth and Air were sadly shaken
By thy humane discovery, Friar Bacon ! (6)

XXXIV.

And as he rushed along, it came to pass he
Fell in with what was late the second column
Under the orders of the General Lascy,
But now reduced, as is a bulky volume
Into an elegant extract (much less massy)
Of heroism, and took his place with solemn
Air 'midst the rest, who kept their valiant faces
And levelled weapons still against the glacié.

XXXV.

Just at this crisis up came Johnson too,
Who had "retreated," as the phrase is when
Men run away much rather than go through
Destruction's jaws into the devil's den ;
But Johnson was a clever fellow, who
Knew when and how "to cut and come again,"
And never run away, except when running
Was nothing but a valorous kind of cunning.

XXXVI.

And so, when all his corps were dead or dying,

Except Don Juan;—a mere novice, whose
More virgin valour never dreamt of flying,

From ignorance of danger, which induces
Its votaries, like Innocence relying

On its own strength with careless nerves, and thence,—
Johnson retired a little just to rally
Those who catch cold in “ shadows of death's valley.”

XXXVII.

And there, a little sheltered from the shot,

Which rained from bastion, battery, parapet,
Rampart, wall, casement, house—for there was not

In this extensive city, sore beset
By Christian soldiery, a single spot

Which did not combat like the devil, as yet,—
He found a number of Chasseurs, all scattered
By the resistance of the chase they battered.

XXXVIII.

And these he called on; and, what's strange, they came

Unto his call, unlike “ the Spirits from
“ The vasty deep,” to whom you may exclaim,

Says Hotspur, long ere they will leave their home;
Their reasons were uncertainty, or shame

At shrinking from a bullet or a bomb,
And that odd impulse which in wars or creeds
Makes men, like cattle, follow him who leads.

XXXIX.

By Jove ! he was a noble fellow, Johnson,
And though his name, than Ajax or Achilles,
Sounds less harmonious, underneath the sun soon
We shall not see his likeness : he could kill his
Man quite as quietly as blows the Monsoon
Her steady breath (which some months the same *still* is)
Seldom he varied feature, hue, or muscle,
And could be very busy without haste.

XL.

And therefore, when he ran away, he did so
Upon reflection, knowing that behind
He would find others who would fain be rid so
Of idle apprehensions, which like wind
Trouble heroic stomachs. Though their lids so
Oft are soon closed, all heroes are not blind,
But when they light upon immediate death,
Retire a little, merely to take breath.

XLI.

But Johnson only ran off, to return
With many other warriors, as we said,
Unto that rather somewhat misty bourn,
Which Hamlet tells us is a pass of dread,
To Jack however this gave but slight concern ;
His soul (like Galvanism upon the dead)
Acted upon the living as on wire,
And led them back into the heaviest fire.

XLII

Egad ! they found the second time what they
The first time thought quite terrible enough
To fly from, *malgrè* all which people say
Of glory, and all that immortal stuff
Which fills a regiment (beside their pay
That daily shilling which makes warriors tough) --
They found on their return the self-same welcome,
Which made some *think*, and others *know* a *Hell* come.

XLIII.

They fell as thick as harvests beneath hail,
Grass before scythes, or corn below the sickle,
Proving that trite old truth, that life's as frail
As any other boon for which man stickle.
The Turkish batteries thrashed them like a sail
Or a good boxer, into a sad pickle
Putting the very bravest, who were knocked
Upon the head, before their guns were cocked.

XLIV.

The Turks behind the traverses and flanks
Of the next bastion, fired away like devils,
And swept, as gales sweep foam away, whole ranks :
However, Heaven knows how, the Fate who levels
Towns, nations, worlds, in her revolving pranks,
So ordered it, amidst these sulphury revels,
That Johnson and some few who had not scampered,
Reached the interior talus of the rampart.

XLV.

First one or two, then five, six, and a dozen
 Came mounting quickly up, for it was now
 All neck or nothing, as like pitch or rosin,
 Flame was showered forth above as well's below,
 So that you scarce could say who best had chosen,
 The gentlemen that were the first to show
 Their martial faces on the parapet,
 Or those who thought it brave to wait as yet.

XLVI.

But those who scaled, found out that their advance
 Was favoured by an accident or blunder,
 The Greek or Turkish Cohorn's ignorance
 Had palisadoed in a way you'd wonder
 To see in forts of Netherlands or France—
 (Though these to our Gibraltar must knock under)—
 Right in the middle of the parapet.
 Just named, these palisades were primly set ;

XLVII.

So that on either side some nine or ten
 Paces were left, whereon you could contrive
 To march ; a great convenience to our men,
 At least to all those who were left aliye,
 Who thus could form a line and fight again ;
 And that which farther aided them to strive
 Was, that they could kick down the palisades,
 Which scarcely rose much higher than grass blades.(7)

XLVIII.

Among the first,—I will not say the *first*,
 For such precedence upon such occasions
 Will oftentime make deadly quarrels burst
 Out between friends as well as allied nations;
 The Briton must be bold who really durst
 Put to such trial John Bull's partial patience,
 As say that Wellington at Waterloo
 Was beaten,—though the Prussians say so too :—

XLIX.

And that if Blucher, Bulow, Gneisenau,
 And God knows who besides in "au" and "ou,"
 Had not come up in time to cast an awe
 Into the hearts of those who fought till now
 As tigers combat with an empty craw,
 The Duke of Wellington had ceased to show
 His orders, also to receive his pensions,
 Which are the heaviest that our history mentions.

L.

But never mind ;—" God save the king !" and kings !
 For if *he* don't, I doubt if *men* will longer—
 I think I hear a little bird, who sings
 The people by and bye will be the stronger.
 The veriest jade will wince whose harness wrings
 So much into the raw as quite to wrong her
 Beyond the rules of posting,—and the Mob
 At last fall sick of imitating Job.

LI.

At first it grumbles, then it swears, and then,
 Like David, flings smooth pebbles 'gainst a giant!
 At last it takes to weapons such as men
 Snatch when despair makes human hearts less pliant.
 Then "comes the tug of war;"—'twill come again,
 I rather doubt; and I would fain say "he on't,"
 If I had not perceived that Revolution
 Alone can save the Earth from Hell's pollution.

LII.

But to continue;—I say not *the* first,
 But of the first, our little friend Don Juan
 Walked o'er the walls of Ismail, as if nurst
 Amidst such scenes—though this was quite a new one
 To him, and I should hope to most. The thirst
 Of Glory, which so pierces through and through one,
 Pervaded him—although a generous creature,
 As warm in heart as feminine in feature.

LIII.

And here he was—who upon Woman's breast,
 Even from a child, felt like a child; how'er
 The man in all the rest might be confest,
 To him it was Elysium to be there;
 And he could even withstand that awkward test
 Which Rousseau points out to the dubious fair,
 "Observe your lover when he *leaves* your arms;"
 But Juan never left them, while they had charms,

LIV.

Unless compelled by fate, by wave or wind,
Or near relations, who are much the same.
But *here* he was!—where each tie that can bind
Humanity must yield to steel and flame:
And *he* whose very body was all Mind,
Flung here by Fate, or Circumstance, which ~~tame~~
The loftiest, hurried by the time and place,
Dashed on like a spurred blood-horse in a race.

LV.

So was his blood stirred while he found resistance,
As is the hunter's at the five-bar gate,
Or double post and rail, where the existence
Of Britain's youth depends upon their weight,
The lightest being the safest: at a distance
He hated cruelty, as all men hate
Blood, until heated—and even there his own
At times would curdle e'er some heavy groan.

LVI.

The General Lascy, who had been hard prest,
Seeing arrive an aid so opportune
As were some hundred youngsters all abreast,
Who came, as if just dropped down from the moon
To Juan, who was nearest him, addressed
His thanks, and hopes to take the city soon,
Not reckoning him to be a "base Bezonian,"
(As Pistol calls it) but a young Livonian.

LVII.

Juan, to whom he spoke in German, knew
As much of German as of Sanscrit, and
In answer made an inclination to
The General who held him in command ;
For seeing one with ribbons black and blue,
Stars, medals, and a bloody sword in hand,
Addressing him in tones which seemed to thank,
He recognized an officer of rank.

LVIII.

Short speeches pass between two men who speak
No common language ;—and besides, in time
Of war and taking towns, when many a shriek
Rings o'er the dialogue, and many a crime
Is perpetrated ere a word can break
Upon the ear, and sounds of horror chime
In like church bells, with sigh, howl, groan, yell, prayer,
There cannot be much conversation there.

LIX.

And therefore all we have related in
Two long octaves, passed in a little minute
But in the same small minute, every sin
Contrived to get itself comprised within it.
The very cannon, deafened by the din,
Grew dumb, for you might almost hear a linnet,
As soon as thunder, 'midst the general noise
Of human Nature's agonizing voice !

LX.

The town was entered. Oh Eternity !—

“ God made the country, and man made the town,”
So Cowper says—and I begin to be

Of his opinion, when I see cast down
Rome, Babylon, Tyre, Carthage, Nineveh.

All walls men know, and many never known ;
And pondering on the present and the past,
To deem the woods should be our home at last.

LXI.

Of all men, saving Sylla the Man-slayer,

Who passes for in life and death most lucky,
Of the great names which in our faces stare,

The General Boon, back-woodsman of Kentucky,
Was happiest amongst mortals any where ;

For killing nothing but a bear or buck, he
Enjoyed the lonely, vigorous, harmless days
Of his old age in wilds of deepest maze.

LXII.

Crime came not near him—she is not the child

Of solitude ; health shrank not from him—for
Her home is in the rarely-trodden wild,

Where if men seek her not, and death be more
Their choice than life, forgive them, as beguiled

By habit to what their own hearts abhor—
In cities caged. The present case in point I

Cite is, that Boon lived hunting up to ninety ;

LXIII.

And what's still stranger, left behind a name
For which men vainly decimate the throng,
Not only famous, but of that *good* fame;
Without which Glory's but a tavern song—
Simple, serene, the antipodes of shame,
Which hate nor envy ere could tinge with wrong;
An active hermit, even in age the child
Of nature, or the Man of Ross run wild.

LXIV.

'Tis true he shrank from men even of his nation,
When they built up unto his darling trees,—
He moved some hundred miles off, for a station
Where there were fewer houses, and more ease.
The inconvenience of civilization
Is, that you neither can be pleased nor please;
But where he met the individual man
He shewed himself as kind as mortal can.

LXV.

He was not all alone: around him grew
A sylvan tribe of children of the chase,
Whose young, unawakened world was ever new,
Nor sword nor sorrow yet had left a trace
On her unwrinkled brow, nor could you view
A frown on Nature's or on human face;—
The free-born forest found and kept them free,
And fresh as is a torrent or a tree.

LXVI.

And tall and strong and swift of foot were they,
Beyond the dwarfing city's pale abortions,
Because their thoughts had never been the prey
Of care or gain : the green woods were their portions,
No sinking Spirits told them they grew grey,
No Fashion made them apes of her distortions ;
Simple they were, not savage ! and their rifles,
Though very true, were not yet used for trifles,

LXVII.

Motion was in their days, Rest in their slumbers,
And Cheerfulness the handmaid of their toil ;
Nor yet too many nor too few their numbers ;
Corruption could not make their hearts her soil :
The Lust which stings, the Splendour which encumbers,
With the free foresters divide no spoil ;
Serene, not sullen, were the solitudes
Of this unsighing people of the woods.

LXVIII.

So much for Nature :—by way of variety,
Now back to thy great joys, Civilization !
And the sweet consequence of large society,
War, Pestilence, the despot's desolation,
The kingly scourge, the lust of Notoriety,
The millions slain by soldiers for their ration,
The scenes like Catherine's boudoir at three score,
With Ismail's storm to soften it the more.

LXIX.

The town was entered : first one column made
Its sanguinary way good—then another ;
The reeking bayonet and the flashing blade
Clashed 'gainst the scimitar, and babe and mother
With distant shrieks were heard Heaven to upbraid ;—
Still closer sulphury clouds began to smother,
The breath of Morn and Mau, where foot by foot
The maddened Turks their city still dispute.

LXX.

Koutousow, he who afterwards beat back
(With some assistance from the frost and snow)
Napoleon on his bold and bloody track,
It happened was himself beat back just now.
He was a jolly fellow, and could crack
His jest alike in face of friend or foe,
Though life, and death, and victory were at stake,
But here it seemed his jokes had ceased to take :

LXXI.

For having thrown himself into a ditch,
Followed in haste by various grenadiers,
Whose blood the puddle greatly did enrich,
He climbed to where the parapet appears ;
But there his project reached it's utmost pitch ;
('Mongst other deaths the General Ribaupierre's.
Was much regretted) for the Moslem Men
Threw them all down into the ditch again.

LXXII.

And had it not been for some stray troops, landing
They knew not where, being carried by the stream
To some spot, where they lost their understanding,
And wandered up and down as in a dream,
Until they reached, as day-break was expanding,
That which a portal to their eyes did seem,—
The great and gay Koutousow might have lain
Where three parts of his column yet remain.

LXXIII.

And scrambling round the rampart, these same troops,
After the taking of the "Cavalier,
Just as Koutousow's most "Forlorn" of "Hopes"
Took like cameleons some slight tinge of fear,
Opened the gate called "Kilia" to the groups
Of baffled heroes who stood shyly near,
Sliding knee-deep in lately frozen mud,
Now thawed into a marsh of human blood.

LXXIV.

The Kozaks, or if so you please, Cossacques—
(I don't much pique myself upon orthography,
So that I do not grossly err in facts,
Statistics, tactics, politics and geography)—
Having been used to serve on horses' backs,
And no great dilettanti in topography
Of fortresses, but fighting where it pleases
Their chiefs to order,—were all cut to pieces.

K

LXXV.

Their column, though the Turkish batteries thundered
Upon them, ne'ertheless had reached the rampart,
And naturally thought they could have plundered
The city, without being further hamper'd ;
But as it happens to brave men, they blundered—
The Turks at first pretended to have scampered,
Only to draw them 'twixt two bastion corners,
From whence they sallied on those Christian scorners.

LXXVI.

Then being taken by the tail—a taking
Fatal to bishops as to soldiers—these
Cossacques were all cut off as day was breaking,
And found their lives were let at a short lease—
But perished without shivering or shaking,
Leaving as ladders their heaped carcasses,
O'er which Lieutenant Colonel Yesouskoi
Marched with the brave battalion of Polouzki :—

LXXVII.

This valiant man killed all the Turks he met,
But could not eat them, being in his turn
Slain by some Musselmans, who would not yet,
Without resistance, see their city burn.
The walls were won, but 'twas an even bet
Which of the armies would have cause to mourn :
'Twas blow for blow, disputing inch by inch,
For one would not retreat, nor t'other flinch.

LXXVIII.

Another column also suffered much :

And here we may remark with the Historian,
You should but give few cartridges to such

Troops as are meant to march with greatest glory on :
When matters must be carried by the touch

Of the bright bayonet, and they all should hurry on,
They sometimes, with a hankering for existence,
Keep merely firing at a foolish distance.

LXXIX.

A junction of the General Meknop's men

(Without the General, who had fallen some time
Before, being badly seconded just then)

Was made at length with those who dared to climb
The death-disgorging rampart once again ;

And though the Turk's resistance was sublime,
They took the bastion, which the Seraskier
Defended at a price extremely dear.

LXXX.

Juan and Johnson, and some volunteers

Among the foremost, offered him good quarter,

A word which little suits with Seraskiers,

Or at least suited not this valiant Tartar.

He died deserving well his country's tears,

A savage sort of military martyr.

An English naval officer, who wished

To make him prisoner, was also dished :

LXXXI.

For all the answer to his proposition

Was from a pistol shot that laid him dead ;
On which the rest, without more intermission,
Began to lay about with steel and lead,
The pious metals most in requisition

On such occasions : not a single head
Was spared,—three thousand Moslems perished here,
And sixteen bayonets pierced the Seraskier.

LXXXII.

The city's taken—only part by part—

And Death is drunk with gore : there's not a street
Where fights not to the last some desperate heart
For those for whom it soon shall cease to beat.

Here War forgot his own destructive Art
In more destroying Nature ; and the heat
Of carnage, like the Nile's sun-sodden Slime,
Engendered monstrous shapes of every Crime.

LXXXIII.

A Russian officer, in martial tread

Over a heap of bodies, felt his heel
Seized fast as if 'twere by the serpent's head,
Whose fangs Eve taught her human seed to feel—
In vain he kicked, and swore, and writhed, and bled
And howled for help as wolves do for a meal—
The teeth still kept their gratifying hold,
As do the subtle snakes described of old.

LXXXIV.

A dying Moslem, who had felt the foot
Of a foe o'er him, snatched at it, and bit
The very tendon, which is most acute—
(That which some ancient Muse or Modern Wit
Named after thee, Achilles) and quite through't
He made the teeth meet, nor relinquished it
Even with his life—for (but they lie) 'tis said
To the live leg still clung the severed head.

LXXXV.

However this may be, 'tis pretty sure
The Russian officer for life was lamed,
For the Turk's teeth stuck faster than a skewer,
And left him 'midst the invalid and maimed :
The regimental surgeon could not cure
His patient, and perhaps was to be blamed
More than the head of the inveterate foe,
Which was cut off and scarce even then let go.

LXXXVI.

But then the fact's a fact—and 'tis the part
Of a true poet to escape from fiction
Whene'er he can ; for there is little art
In leaving verse more free from the restriction
Of truth than prose, unless to suit the mart
For what is sometimes called poetic diction
And that outrageous appetite for lies
Which Satan angles with for souls like flies.

LXXXVII.

The City's taken, but not rendered !—No !
There's not a Moslem that hath yielded sword :
The blood may gush out, as the Danube's flow
Rolls by the city wall ; but deed nor word
Acknowledge aught of dread of death or foe :
In vain the yell of victory is roared
By the advancing Muscovite—the groan
Of the last foe is echoed by his own.

LXXXVIII.

The bayonet pierces and the sabre cleaves,
And human lives are lavished every where,
As the year closing whirls the scarlet leaves
When the stript forest bows to the bleak air,
And groans ; and thus the peopled City grieves,
Shorn of its best and loveliest, and left bare ;
But still it falls with vast and awful splinters,
As Oaks blown down with all their thousand winters.

LXXXIX.

It is an awful topic—but 'tis not
My cue for any time to be terrific :
For checquered as is seen our human lot
With good, and bad, and worse, alike prolific
Of melancholy merriment, to quote
Too much of one sort would be soporific ;
Without, or with, offence to friends or foes,
I sketch your world exactly as it goes.

XC.

And one good action in the midst of crimes
Is "quite refreshing," in the affected phrase,
Of these ambrosial, Pharisaic times,
With all their pretty milk-and-water ways,
And may serve therefore to bedew these rhymes
A little scorched at present with the blaze
Of conquest and its consequences, which
Make Epic poesy so rare and rich.

XCI.

Upon a taken bastion where there lay
Thousands of slaughtered men, a yet warm group
Of murdered women, who had found their way
To this vain refuge, made the good heart droop
And shudder ; while, as beautiful as May,
A female child of ten years tried to stoop,
And hide her little palpitating breast
Amidst the bodies lull'd in bloody rest.

XCII.

Two villainous Cossacques pursued the child
With flashing eyes and weapons : matched with them
The rudest brute that roams Siberia's wild
Has feelings pure and polished as a gem,—
The bear is civilized, the wolf is mild :
And whom for this at last must we condemn ?
Their natures ? or their sovereigns, who employ
All arts to teach their subjects to destroy ?

XCIII.

Their sabres glittered o'er her little head,
Whence her fair hair rose twining with affright,
Her hidden face was plunged amidst the dead :
When Juan caught a glimpse of this sad sight,
I shall not say exactly what he *said*,
Because it might not solace " ears polite ;"
But what he did was to lay on their backs,
The readiest way of reasoning with Cossacques.

XCIV.

One's hip he slashed, and split the other's shoulder,
And drove them with their brutal yells to seek
If there might be surgeons who could solder
The wounds they richly merited, and shriek
Their baffled rage and pain ; while waxing colder
As he turned o'er each pale and gory cheek,
Don Juan raised his little captive from
The heap a moment more had made her tomb.

XCV.

And she was chill as they and on her face
A slender streak of blood announced how near
Her fate had been to that of all her race ;
For the same blow which laid her Mother here,
Had scarred her brow, and left its crimson trace
As the last link with all she had held dear ;
But else unhurt, she opened her large eyes,
And gazed on Juan with a wild surprise.

CXVL

Just at this instant, while their eyes were fixed
Upon each other, with dilated glance,
In Juan's look, pain, pleasure, hope, fear, mixed
With joy to save, and dread of some mischance
Unto his protegee ; while her's, transfixed
With infant terrors, glared as from a trance,
A pure, transparent, pale, yet radiant face,
Like to a lighted alabaster vase ;

XCVII.

Up came John Johnson : (I will not say "*Jack*."
For that were vulgar, cold, and common place
On great occasions, such as an attack
On cities, as hath been the present case :)
Up Johnson came, with hundreds at his back,
Exclaiming : " Juan ! Juan ! On, boy ! brace
" Your arm, and I'll bet Moscow to a dollar,
" That you and I will win St. George's collar. (8)

XCVIII.

" The Seraskier is knocked upon the head,
" But the stone bastion still remains, wherein
" The old Pacha sits among some hundreds dead,
" Smoking his pipe quite calmly 'midst the din
" Of our artillery and his own : 'tis said
" Our killed, already piled up to the chin,
" Lie round the battery ; but still it batters,
" And grape in volleys, like a vineyard scatters.

XCIX.

"Then up with me!"—But Juan answered, "Look
 "Upon this child—I saved her—must not leave
 "Her life to chance; but point me out some nook
 "Of safety, where she less may shrink and grieve,
 "And I am with you."—Whereon Johnson took [sleeve
 A glance around—and shrugged—and twitched his
 And black silk neckcloth—and replied, "You're right;
 "Poor thing! what's to be done? I'm puzzled quite."

C.

Said Juan—"Whatsoever is to be
 "Done, I'll not quit her till she seems secure
 "Of present life a good deal more than we."—
 Quoth Johnson,—"*Neither* will I quite ensure;
 "But at the least *you* may die gloriously."—
 Juan replied—"At least I will endure
 "Whate'er is to be borne—but not resign
 "This child, who is parentless and therefore mine."

CI.

Johnson said—"Juan, we've no time to lose;
 "The child's a pretty child—a very pretty—
 "I never saw such eyes—but hark! now choose
 "Between your fame and feelings, pride and pity:
 "Hark! how the roar increases!—no excuse
 "Will serve when there is plunder in a city;—
 "I should be loth to march without you, but,
 "By God!—we'll be too late for the first cut."

CII.

But Juan was immoveable ; until

Johnson, who really loved him in his way,
Picked out amongst his followers with some skill

Such as he thought the least given up to prey ;
And swearing if the infant came to ill

That they should all be shot on the next day,
But if she were delivered safe and sound,
They should at least have fifty roubles round,

CIII.

And all allowances besides of plunder

In fair proportion with their comrades :—then
Juan consented to march on through thunder,

Which thinned at every step their ranks of men :
And yet the rest rushed eagerly—no wonder,

For they were heated by the hope of gain,
A thing which happens every where each day—
No Hero trusteth wholly to half-pay.

CIV.

And such is victory and such is man !

At least nine-tenths of what we call so ;—God
May have another name for half we scan

As human beings, or his ways are odd.
But to our subject: a brave Tartar Khan,—

Or “*Sultan*,” as the author (to whose nod
In prose I bend my humble verse) doth call
This chieftain—somehow would not yield at all :

CV.

But flanked by *five* brave sons (such is polygamy,
That she spawns warriors by the score, where none
Are prosecuted for that false crime bigamy)
He never could believe the city won
While courage clung but to a single twig.—Am I
Describing Priam's, Peleus', or Jove's son?
Neither,—but a good, plain, old, temperate man,
Who fought with his five children in the van.

CVI.

To ~~take~~ him was the point. The truly brave, ,
When they behold the brave opprest with odds,
Are touched with a desire to shield and save ;—
A mixture of wild beasts and demi-gods
Are they—now furious as the sweeping wave,
Now moved with pity ; even as sometimes nods
The rugged tree unto the summer wind,
Compassion breathes along the savage mind.

CVII.

But he would *not* be *taken*, and replied
To all the propositions of surrender
By mowing Christians down on every side,
As obstinate as Swedish Charles at Bender.
His five brave boys no less the foe defied ;
Whereon the Russian pathos grew less tender,
As being a virtue, like terrestrial patience,
Apt to wear out on trifling provocations.

CVIII.

And spite of Johnson and of Juan, who
 Expended all their Eastern phraseology
 In begging him for God's sake, just to show
 So much less fight as might form an apology
 For *them* in saving such a desperate foe—
 He hewed away like doctors of theology
 When they dispute with sceptics ; and with curses
 Struck at his friends, as babies beat their nurses.

CIX.

Nay, he had wounded, though but slightly, both
 Juan and Johnson, ; whereupon they fell,
 The first with sighs, the second with an oath,
 Upon his angry Sultanship, pell-mell,
 And all around were grown exceeding wroth
 At such a pertinacious Infidel,
 And poured upon him and his sons like rain,
 Which they resisted like a sandy plain.

CX.

That drinks and still is dry. At last they perished—
 His second son was levelled by a shot ;
 His third was sabred ; and the fourth, most cherished
 Of all the five, by bayonets met his lot ;
 The fifth, who, by a Christian mother nourished,
 Had been neglected, ill-used, and what not,
 Because deformed, yet died, all game and bottom,
 To save a sire who blushed that he begot him.

L

CXI.

The eldest was a true and tameless Tartar,
As great a scorner of the Nazarene
As ever Mahomet picked out for a martyr,
Who only saw the black-eyed girls in green,
Who make the beds of those who won't take quarter
On Earth, in Paradise ; and when once seen,
Those Houris, like all other pretty creatures,
Do just what'er they please, by dint of features.

CXII.

And what they pleased to do with the young Khan
In heaven, I know not, nor pretend to guess !
But doubtless they prefer a fine young man
To tough old heroes, and can do no less ;
And that's the cause, no doubt why, if we scan
A field of battle's ghastly wilderness,
For one rough, weather-beaten, veteran body.
You'll find ten thousand handsome coxcombs bloody.

CXIII.

Your Houris also have a natural pleasure
In lopping off your lately married men
Before the bridal Hours have danced their measure,
And the sad, second moon grows dim again,
Or dull Repentance hath had dreary leisure
To wish him back a bachelor now and then.
And thus your Houri (it may be) disputes
Of these brief blossoms the immediate fruits.

CXIV.

Thus the young Khan, with Houris in his sight,
 Thought not upon the charms of four young brides,
 But bravely rushed on his first heavenly night.
 In short, howe'er our better Faith derides,
 These black-eyed virgins make the Moslema fight,
 As though there was one Heaven, and none besides—
 Whereas, if all be true we hear of Heaven
 And Hell, there must at least be six or seven;

CXV.

So fully flashed the phantom on his eyes,
 That when the very lance was in his heart,
 He shouted, "Allah!" and saw Paradise
 With all its veil of mystery drawn apart,
 And bright Eternity without disguise
 On his soul, like a ceaseless sunrise, dart;—
 With Prophets, Houris, Angels, Saints, descried
 In one voluptuous blaze,—and then he died:

CXVI.

But, with a heavenly rapture on his face,
 The good old Khan, who long had ceased to see
 Houris, or ought except his florid race
 Who grew like cedars round him gloriously—
 When he beheld his latest hero grace
 The earth, which he became like a felled tree,
 Paused for a moment from the fight, and cast
 A glance on that slain son, his first and last.

CXVII.

The soldiers, who beheld him drop his point
Stopped as if once more willing to concede
Quarter, in case he bade them not "aroint!"
As he before had done. He did not heed
Their pause nor signs : his heart was out of joint,
And shook (till now unshaken) like a reed,
As he looked down upon his children gone,
And felt—though done with life—he was alone.

CXVIII.

But 'twas a transient tremor :—with a spring
Upon the Russian steel his breast he flung,
As carelessly as hurls the moth her wing
Against the light wherein she dies : he clung
Closer, that all the deadlier they might wring,
Unto the bayonets which had pierced his young ;
And throwing back a dim look on his sons,
In one wide wound poured forth his soul at once.

CXIX.

'Tis strange enough—the rough, tough soldiers, who
Spared neither sex nor age in their career
Of carnage, when this old man was pierced through,
And lay before them with his children near,
Touched by the heroism of him they slew,
Were melted for a moment ; though no tear
Flowed from their blood-shot eyes, all red with strife,
They honoured such determined scorn of life.

CXX.

But the stone bastion still kept up its fire,
Where the chief Pacha calmly held his post,
Some twenty times he made the Russ retire,
And baffled the assaults of all their host ;
At length he condescended to enquire
If yet the city's rest were won or lost ;
And being told the latter, sent a Bey
To answer Ribas' summons to give way.

CXXI.

In the mean time, cross-legged, with great sang froid
Among the scorching ruins he sat smoking
Tobacco on a little carpet ;—Troy
Saw nothing like the scene around ;—yet looking
With martial stoicism, nought seemed to annoy
His stern philosophy ; but gently stroking
His beard, he puffed his pipe's ambrosial gales,
As if he had three lives as well as tails.

CXXII.

The town was taken—whether he might yield,
Himself or bastion, little mattered now ;
His stubborn valour was no future shield.
Ismail's no more ! The crescent's silver bow
Sunk, and the crimson cross glared o'er the field,
But red with no redeeming gore : the glow
Of burning streets, like moonlight on the water,
Was imaged back in blood, the sea of slaughter.

L 3

CXXIII.

All that the mind would shrink from of excesses ;
All that the body perpetrates of bad :
All that we read, hear, dream of man's distresses ;
All that the Devil would do if run stark mad ;
All that defies the worst which pen expresses ;
All by which Hell is peopled, or as sad
As Hell—mere mortals who their power abuse—
Was here (as heretofore and since) let loose.

CXXIV.

If here and there some transient trait of pity
Was shown, and some more noble heart broke through
Its bloody bond, and saved perhaps some pretty
Child, or an aged, helpless man or two—
What's this in one annihilated city,
Where thousand loves, and ties, and duties grow ?
Cockneys of London ! Muscadins of Paris !
Just ponder what a pious pastime war is.

CXXV.

Think how the joys of reading a Gazette
Are purchased by all agonies and crimes :
Or if these do not move you, don't forget
Such doom may be your own in after times.
Meantime the taxes, Castlereagh, and debt,
Are hints as good as sermons, or as rhymes.
Read your own hearts and Ireland's present story,
Then feed her famine fat with Wellesley's glory.

CXXVI.

But still there is unto a patriot nation,
Which loves so well its country and its king,
A subject of sublimest exultation—
Bear it, ye Muses, on your brightest wing!
Howe'er the mighty locust, Desolation,
Strip your green fields, and to your harvests cling,
Gaunt famine never shall approach the throne—
Though Ireland starve, great George weighs twenty stone

CXXVII.

But let me put an end unto my theme :
There was an end of Ismail—hapless town!
Far flashed her burning towers o'er Danube's stream,
And redly run his blushing waters down.
The horrid war-whoop and the shriller scream
Rose still ; but fainter were the thunders grown :
Of forty thousand who had manned the wall,
Some hundreds breathed—the rest were silent all !

CXXVIII.

In one thing ne'ertheless 'tis fit to praise
The Russian army upon this occasion,
A virtue much in fashion now-a-days
And therefore worthy of commemoration :
The topic's tender, so shall be my phrase—
Perhaps the season's chill, and their long station
In winter's depth, or want of rest and victual.
Had made them chaste :—they ravished very little.

CXXIX.

Much did they slay, more plunder, and no less
Might here and there occur some violation
In the other line ;—but not to such excess
As when the French, that dissipated nation,
Take towns by storm : no causes can I guess,
Except cold weather and commiseration ;
But all the ladies, save some twenty score,
Were almost as much virgins as before.

CXXX.

Some odd mistakes too happened in the dark,
Which shewed a want of lanthorns, or of taste—
Indeed the smoke was such they scarce could mark
Their friends from foes,—besides such things from
Occur, though rarely, when there is a spark [haste
Of light to save the venerably chaste :—
But six old damsels, each of seventy years,
Were all deflowered by different Grenadiers.

CXXXI.

But on the whole their continence was great ;
So that some disappointment there ensued
To those who had felt the inconvenient state
Of “ single blessedness,” and thought it good,
(Since it was not their fault, but only fate,
To bear these crosses) for each waning prude
To make a Roman sort of Sabine wedding,
Without the expence and the suspense of bedding.

CXXXII.

Some voices of the buxom middle-aged
Were also heard to wonder in the din
(Widows of forty were these birds long caged)
“Wherefore the ravishing did not begin !”
But while the thirst for gore and plunder raged,
There was small leisure for superfluous sin ;
But whether they escaped or no, lies hid
In darkness—I can only hope they did.

CXXXIII.

Suwarrow now was conqueror—a match
For Timour or for Zinghis in his trade.
While mosques and streets, beneath his eyes, like thatch
Blazed, and the cannon’s roar was scarcely allayed,
With bloody hands he wrote his first dispatch ;
And here exactly follows what he said :—
“Glory to God and to the Empress !” (*Powers
Eternal ! such names mingled !*) “Ismail’s our’s !” (9)

CXXXIV.

Methinks these are the most tremendous words,
Since “Menè, Menè, Tekel,” and “Uparsin,”
Which hands or pens have ever traced of swords.
Heaven help me ! I’m but little of a parson :
What Daniel read was short-hand of the Lord’s,
Severe, sublime ; the Prophet wrote no farce on
The fate of Nations ;—but this Russ so witty
Could rhyme, like Nero, o’er a burning city.

CXXXV.

He wrote this Polar melody, and set it,
Duly accompanied by shrieks and groans,
Which few will sing, I trust, but none forget it—
For I will teach if possible the stones
To rise against Earth's tyrants. Never let it
Be said, that we still truckle unto thrones ;—
But ye—our children's children ! think how we
Showed *what things were* before the world was free !

CXXXVI.

That hour is not for us, but 'tis for you
And as, in the great joy of your millennium,
You hardly will believe such things were true
As now occur, I thought that I would pen you 'em ;
But may their very memory perish too !—
Yet if perchance remembered, still disdain you 'em
More than you scorn the savages of yore,
Who *painted* their *bare* limbs, but *not* with gore,

CXXXVII.

And when you hear historians talk of thrones,
And those that sate upon them, let it be
As we now gaze upon the Mammoth's bones,
And wonder what old world such things could see,
Or hieroglyphics on Egyptian stones,
The pleasant riddles of Futurity—
Guessing at what shall happily be hid
As the real purpose of a Pyramid.

CXXXVIII.

Reader ! I have kept my word,—at least so far
As the first Canto promised. You have now
Had sketches of love, tempest, travel, war—

All very accurate, you must allow,
And *Epic*, if plain Truth should prove no bar ;
For I have drawn much less with a long bow
Than my fore-runners. Carelessly I sing,
But Phœbus lends me now and then a string,

CXXXIX.

With which I still can harp, and carp, and fiddle.

What further hath befallen or may befall
The hero of this grand poetic riddle,

I by and bye may tell you, if at all :
But now I choose to break off in the middle,

Worn out with battering Ismail's stubborn wall,
While Juan is sent off with the dispatch
For which all Petersburg is on the watch.

CXL.

This special honour was conferred, because

He had behaved with courage and humanity ;—
Which *last*, men alike, when they have time to pause

From their ferocities produced by vanity.
His little captive gained him some applause,

For saving her amidst the wild insanity
Of carnage ; and I think he was more glad in her,
Safety, than his new order of St. Vladimir.

CXLI.

The Moslem orphan went with her protector,
For she was homeless, houseless, helpless : all
Her friends, like the sad family of Hector,
Had perished in the field or by the wall :
Her very place of birth was but a spectre
Of what it had been ; there the Muezzin's call
To prayer was heard no more ! And Juan wept,
And made a vow to shield her, which he kept.



END OF CANTO VIII.

NOTES TO CANTO EIGHT.

Note 1, page 75, stanza viii. line 8.

Allah Hu! is properly the war cry of the Mussulmans, and they dwell long on the last syllable, which gives it a very wild and peculiar effect.

Note 2, page 76, stanza ix. line 6.

"But *thy** most dreaded instrument
 "In working out a pure intent,
 "Is man arrayed for mutual slaughter;
 "Yea, *Carnage is thy Daughter.*"

WORDSWORTH'S Thanksgiving Ode.

* To wit, the Deity's! this is perhaps as pretty a pedigree for Murder as ever was found out by Garter King at Arms.—What would have been said, had any free-spoken people discovered such a lineage?

Note 3, Page 79, stanza xviii. line 8.

A fact; see the Waterloo Gazette. I recollect remarking at the time to a friend:—"THERE IS FAME; a man is killed, his name is Grose, and they print it Grove." I was at College with the deceased, who was a very amiable and clever young man, and his society in great request for his wit, gaiety, and "*Chansons a boire.*"

Note 4, page 80, stanza xxiii. line 8.

See Major Vallencey and Sir Lawrence Parsons.

Note 5, page 81, stanza xxv. line 8.

The Portuguese proverb says that "Hell is paved with good intentions."

Note 6, page 84, stanza xxxiii, line 8.

Gunpowder is said to have been discovered by this Friar.

Note 7, page 88, stanza xlvii. line 8.

They were but two feet high above the level.

Note 8, page 105, stanza xcvi. line 8.

The Russian Military order.

Note 9, page 133, stanza cxxxiii. line 8.

In the original Russian—

"Slava bogu! slava vam!
 Krepost Vazala, y ia tam."

A kind of couplet; for he was a poet.

Benbow, Printer, Castle-street, Leicester-square, London.

NOTES TO CANTOS IX. X. XI.

1. Query—Ney?—Printer's devil.

2. "I at this time got a post, being for fatigue, with four others. We were sent to break biscuit, and make a mess for Lord Wellington's hounds. I was very hungry, and thought it a good job at the time, as we got our own fill while we broke the biscuit, a thing I had not got for some days. When thus engaged, the Prodigal Son was never once out of my mind; and I sighed, as I fed the dogs, over my humbled situation and my ruined hopes."—Journal of a Soldier of the 71st Regiment, during the War in Spain.

3. He was killed in a conspiracy, after his temper had been exasperated by his extreme costivity to a degree of insanity.

4. He was the "grande passion" of the grande Catherine; see her Lives under the head "Lanskoi."

5. This was written long before the suicide of that person.

6. "His fortune swells him, it is rank, he's married." Sir Giles Overreach; Massinger. See a "New Way to pay old Debts."

7. "Reformers," or rather "Reformed." The Baron Bradwardine in Waverley is authority for the word.

8. Query, *suff*?—Printer's Devil.

9. The brig of Don, near the "auld toun" of Aberdeen, with its one arch and its black deep salmon stream below, is in my memory as yesterday. I still remember, though perhaps I may misquote the awful proverb which made me pause to cross it, and yet lean over it with a childish delight, being an only son, at least by the Mother's side. The saying as recollected by me was this, but I have never heard or seen it since I was nine years of age:

"Brig of Balgounie, black's your wa,

"Wi' a wife's ae son, and a mear's ae foal,

"Doun ye shall fa."

10. A metaphor taken from the 'forty-horse power' of a steam engine. That mad wag, the Rev. S. S. sitting by a brother Clergyman at dinner, observed afterwards that his dull neighbour had a "twelve-parson power" of conversation.

11. "Hyde."—I believe a hyde of land to be a legitimate word, and as such subject to the tax of a quibble.

12. The Empress went to the Crimea accompanied by the Emperor Joseph, in the year—I forget which.

13. In the Empress Anne's time Biren her favourite assumed the name and arms of the "Birons" of France, which families are yet extant with that of England: there are still the daughters of Courland of that name; one of them I remember seeing in England in the blessed year of the Allies—the Duchess of S.—to whom the Duchess of S.—t presented me as a namesake.

NOTES.

14. St. Ursula and her eleven thousand virgins were still extant in 1816, and may be so yet as much as ever.

15. India; America.

16. The advance of science and of language has rendered it unnecessary to translate the above good and true English, spoken in its original purity by the select mobility and their patrons. The following is a stanza of a song which was very popular, at least in my early days:

"On the high toby-spice flash the muzzle,

"In spite of each gallows old scout:

"If you at the spelliken can't hustle,

"You'll be hobbled in making a Clout.

"Then your Blowing will wax gallows haughty,

"When she hears of your scaly mistake,

"She'll surely turn snitch for the forty—

"That her Jack may be regular weight."

If there be any Gemman so ignorant as to require a traduction, I refer him to my old friend and corporeal pastor and master, John Jackson, Esq., Professor of Pugilism; who I trust still retains the strength and symmetry of his model of a form, together with his good humour and athletic as well as mental accomplishments.

17. "Hells," gaming-houses. What their number may now be in this life, I know not. Before I was of age, I knew them pretty accurately, both "gold" and "silver." I was once nearly called out by an acquaintance, because when he asked me where I thought that his soul would be found hereafter, I answered, "In Silver Hell."

18. "Anent" was a Scotch phrase meaning "concerning"—"with regard to:" it has been made English by the Scotch Novels; and as the Frenchman said—"if it be not, ought to be English."

19. "Drapery Misses"—This term is probably any thing now but a mystery. It was however almost so to me when I first returned from the East in 1811—1812. It means a pretty, a highborn, a fashionable young female, well instructed by her friends, and furnished by her milliner with a wardrobe upon credit, to be repaid when married, by the husband. The riddle was first read to me by a young and pretty heiress, on my praising the "drapery" of an "untochered" but "pretty virginities" (like Mrs. Ann Page) of the then day, which has now been some years yesterday;—she assured me that the thing was common in London; and, as her own thousands and blooming looks, and rich simplicity of array, put any suspicion in her own case out of the question, I confess I gave some credit to the allegation. If necessary, authorities might be cited, in which case I could quote both 'drapery' and the wearers. Let us hope, however, that it is now obsolete.

20. "Divinae Particularum Aurae.

Benbow, Printer, 9, Castle-street, Leicester-square, London.

DON JUAN.

CANTO IX.

I.

OH, Wellington! (or "Vilainton"—for Fame
Sounds the heroic syllables both ways ;
France could not even conquer your great name,
But punned it down to this facetious phrase—
Beating or beaten she will laugh the same)
You have obtained great pensions and much praise ;
Glory like yours should any dare gainsay,
Humanity would rise, and thunder "Nay!" (1)

II.

I don't think that you used K—n—rd quite well
In Marinêt's affair—in fact 'twas shabby,
And like some other things won't do to tell
Upon your tomb in Westminster's old abbey.
Upon the rest it is not worth while to dwell,
Such tales being for the tea hours of some tabby ;
But though your years as *man* tend fast to zero,
In fact your Grace is still but a *young Hero*.

M

III.

Though Britain owes (and pays you too) so much,
Yet Europe doubtless owes you greatly more:
You have repaired Legitimacy's crutch,
A prop not quite so certain as before:
The Spanish, and the French as well as Dutch,
Have seen, and felt, how strongly you *restore*;
And Waterloo has made the world your debtor,
(I wish your bards would sing it rather better.)

IV.

You are "the best of cut-throats:"—do not start;
The phrase is Shakespeare's, and not misapplied:—
War's a brain-spattering, windpipe-slitting art,
Unless her cause by Right be sanctified.
If you have acted *once* a generous part,
The World, not the World's masters, will decide,
And I shall be delighted to learn who,
Save you and yours, have gained by Waterloo?

V.

I am no flatterer—you've supped full of flattery:
They say you like it too—'tis no great wonder:
He whose whole life has been assault and battery,
At last may get a little tired of thunder;
And swallowing eulogy much more than satire, he
May like being praised for every lucky blunder,
Call'd "Saviour of the Nations"—not yet saved,
And Europe's Liberator—still enslaved.

VI.

I've done. Now go and dine from off the plate
Presented by the Prince of the Brazils,
And send the sentinel before your gate (2)
A slice or two from your luxurious meals ;
He fought, but has not fed so well of late.

Some hunger too they say the people feels :—
There is no doubt that you deserve your ration,
But pray give back a little to the nation.

VII.

I don't mean to reflect—a man so great as
You, my Lord Duke ! is far above reflection.
The high Roman fashion too of Cincinnatus,
With modern history has but small connection :
Though as an Irishman you love potatoes,
You need not take them under your direction ;
And half a million for your Sabine farm
Is rather dear !—I'm sure 'I mean no harm.

VIII.

Great men have always scorned great recompenses :
Epaminondas saved his Thebes, and died,
Not leaving even his funeral expenses :
George Washington had thanks and nought beside,
Except the all-cloudless Glory (which few men's is)
To free his country : Pitt too had his pride,
And as a high-soul'd Minister of State is
Renown'd for ruining Great Britain gratis.

IX.

Never had mortal Man such opportunity,
Except Napoleon, or abus'd it more :
You might have freed fallen Europe from the Unity
Of Tyrants, and been blest from shore to shore :
And now—What *is* your fame ? Shall the muse tune it ye ?
Now—that the rabble's first vain shout's are o'er ?
Go ! hear it in your famish'd Country's cries !
Behold the World ! and curse your victories !

X.

As these new Cantos touch on warlike feats,
To *you* the unflattering Muse deigns to inscribe
Truths, that you will not read in the Gazettes,
But which 'tis time to teach the hireling tribe
Who fatten on their Country's gore, and debts,
Must be recited, and—without a bribe.
You *did great* things ; but not being *great* in mind,
Have left *undone* the *greatest*—and mankind.

XI.

Death laughs—go ponder o'er the skeleton
With which men image out the unknown thing,
That hides the past world, like to a set sun
Which still elsewhere may rouse a brighter spring—
Death laughs at all you weep for ;—look upon
This hourly dread of all ! whose *threatened sting*
Turns life to terror, even though in its sheath :
Mark ! how its lipless mouth grins without breath ;

XII.

Mark ! how it laughs and scorns at all you are
And yet *was* what you are : from ear to ear
It *laughs not*—there is now no fleshy bar
So called ; the Antic long hath ceased to *hear*,
But still he *smiles* ; and whether near or far
He strips from man that mantle (far more dear
Than even the tailor's) his incarnate skin,
White, black, or copper—the dead bones will grin.

XIII.

And thus Death laughs,—it is sad merriment,
But still it *is* so ; and with such example
Why should not Life be equally content
With his Superior, in a smile to trample
Upon the nothings which are daily spent
Like bubbles on an ocean much less ample
Than the eternal deluge, which devours
Suns as rays—worlds like atoms—years like hours.

XIV.

“ To be or not to be ! that is the question,”
Says Shakspeare, who just now is much in fashion.
I am neither Alexander nor Hephæstion,
Nor ever had for *abstract* fame much passion ;
But would much rather have a sound digestion,
Than Buonaparte's cancer :—could I dash on
Through fifty victories to shame or fame,
Without a stomach—what were a good name ?

XV.

"Oh dura illa messorum!" "Oh
Ye rigid guts of reapers!" I translate
For the great benefit of those who know
What Indigestion is—that inward fate
Which makes all Styx through one small liver flow.
A peasant's sweat is worth is Lord's estate:
Let *this* one toil of bread—*that* rack for rent,
He who sleeps best, may be the most content.

XVI.

"To be or not to be?"—Ere I decide,
I should be glad to know that which is *being*?
'Tis true we speculate both far and wide,
And deem, because we *see*, we are *all seeing*:
For my part, I'll enlist on neither side,
Until I see both sides for once agreeing.
For me, I sometimes think that Life is Death,
Rather than Life a mere affair of breath.

XVII.

"Que sçais-je?" was the Motte of Montaigne,
As also of the first Academicians;
That all is dubious which Man may attain,
Was one of their most favourite positions.
There's no such thing as certainty, that's plain
As any of Mortality's Conditions;
So little do we know what we're about in
This world, I doubt if doubt itself be doubting.

XVIII.

It is a pleasant voyage perhaps to float,
 Like Pyrrho, on a sea of speculation ;
 But what if carrying sail capsize the boat ?
 Your wise men don't know much of navigation ;
 And swimming long in the abyss of thought
 Is apt to tire : a calm and shallow station
 Well nigh the shore, where one stoops down and gathers
 Some pretty shell, is best for moderate bathers.

XIX.

"But Heaven," as Cassio says, "is 'above all,—
 "No more of this then, let us pray !" We have
 Souls to save, since Eve's slip and Adam's fall,
 Which tumbled all mankind into the grave,
 Besides fish, beasts, and birds. "The sparrow's fall
 "Is special providence," though how it gave
 Offence, we know not ; probably it perched
 Upon the tree which Eve so fondly searched.

XX.

Oh ! ye immortal Gods ! what is Theogony ?
 Oh ! thou too mortal Man ! what is Philanthropy ?
 Oh ! World, which was and is, what is Cosmogony ?
 Some people have accused me of Misanthropy ;
 And yet I know no more than the mahogany
 That forms this desk of what they mean—*Lykanthropy*
 I comprehend, for without transformation
 Men become wolves on any slight occasion.

XXI.

But I, the mildest, meekest of mankind,

Like Moses, or Melancthon, who have ne'er
Done any thing exceedingly unkind,—

And (though I could not now and then forbear
Following the bent of body or of mind)

Have always had a tendency to spare,—
Why do they call me misanthrope? Because
They hate me, not I them :—and here we'll pause.

XXII.

'Tis time we should proceed with our good poem,—

For I maintain that it is really good,
Not only in the body, but the proem,

However little both are understood
Just now,— but by and by the Truth will show 'em
Herself in her sublimest attitude :
And till she doth, I fain must be content
To share her Beauty and her Banishment.

XXIII.

Our Hero (and I trust, kind reader! yours—)

Was left upon his way to the chief City
Of the immortal Peter's polished boors, [witty,
Who still have shown themselves more brave than
I know its mighty Empire now allures

Much flattery—Even Voltairé's and that's a pity.
For me, I deem an absolute Autocrat
Not a Barbarian, but much worse than that.

XXIV.

And I will war, at least in words (and—should
My chance so happen—deeds) with all who war
With Thought—and of Thought's foes by far most rude,
Tyrants and Sycophants have been and are.
I know not who may conquer: If I could
Have such a prescience, it should be no bar
To this my plain, sworn, downright detestation
Of every despotism in every nation.

XXV.

It is not that I adulate the people:
Without *me*, there are Demagogues enough,
And infidels, to pull down every steeple
And set up in their stead some proper stuff.
Whether they may sow Scepticism to reap Hell,
As is the Christian dogma rather rough,
I do not know;—I wish men to be free
As much from mobs as kings—from you as me.

XXVI.

The consequence is, being of no party,
I shall offend all parties:—never mind!
My words, at least, are more sincere and hearty
Than if I sought to sail before the wind.
He who has nought to gain can have small art: he
Who neither wishes to be bound nor bind,
May still expatiate freely, as will I,
Nor give my voice to Slavery's Jackall cry.

XXVII.

That's an appropriate simile, *that Jackall* ;—

I've heard them in the Ephesian ruins howl
By night, as do that mercenary pack all

Power's base purveyors, who for pickings prowl,
And scent the prey their masters would attack all.

However, the poor Jackalls are less foul
(As being the brave lions' keen providers)
Than human Insects, catering for Spiders.

XXVIII.

Raise but an arm ! 'twill brush their web away,

And without *that*, their poison and their claws
Are useless. Mind, good People ! what I say

(Or rather Peoples)—*go on* without pause !
The web of these Tarantulas each day

Increases, till you shall make common cause :
None, save the Spanish Fly and Attic Bee,
As yet are strongly stinging to be free.

XXIX.

Don Juan, who had shone in the late slaughter,

Was left upon his way with the dispatch,
Where Blood was talked of as we would of Water ;

And carcasses that lay as thick as thatch
O'er silenced cities, merely served to flatter

Fair Catherine's pastime—who looked on the match
Between these nations as a main of cocks,
Wherein she liked her own to stand like rocks.

XXX.

And there in a *kibitka* he rolled on,
(A cursed sort of carriage without springs,
Which on rough roads leaves scarcely a whole bone)
Pondering on glory, chivalry, and kings,
And orders, and on all that he had done—
And wishing that post horses had the wings
Of Pegasus, or at the least Post Chaises.
Had feathers, when a traveller on deep ways is.

XXXI.

At every jolt—and they were many—still
He turned his eyes upon his little charge,
As if he wished that she should fare less ill
Than he, in these sad highways left at large
To ruts, and flints, and lovely Nature's skill,
Who is no paviour, nor admits a barge
On *her* canals, where God takes sea and land,
Fishery and farm, both into his own hand.

XXXII.

At least he pays no rent, and has best right
To be the first of what we used to call
“Gentlemen Farmers”—a race worn out quite,
Since lately there have been no rents at all,
And “Gentlemen” are in a piteous plight,
And “farmers” can't raise Ceres from her fall:
She fell with Buonaparte—What strange thoughts
Arise, when we see Emperors fall with oats !

XXXIII.

But Juan turned his eyes on the sweet child

Whom he had saved from slaughter—what a trophy!

Oh, ye who build up monuments, defiled

With gore, like Nadir Shah, that costive Sophy,
Who, after leaving Hindostan a wild,

And scarce to the Mogul a cup of coffee
To sooth his woes withal, was slain, the sinner!
Because he could no more digest his dinner ;— (3)

XXXIV.

Oh ye! or we! or he! or she! reflect,

That *one* life saved, especially if young
Or pretty, is a thing to recollect

Far sweeter than the greenest laurel sprung
From the manure of human clay, though decked

With all the praises ever said or sung,
Though hymned by every harp, unless within
Your heart joins Chorus, Fame is but a din.

XXXV.

Oh! ye great Authors luminous, voluminous!

Ye twice ten hundred thousand daily scribes!
Whose pamphlets, volumes, newspapers illumine us!

Whether you're paid by Government in bribes,
To prove the public debt is not consuming us—

Or, roughly treading on the "Courtier's kibes"
With clownish heel, your popular circulation
Feeds you by printing half the realm's Starvation ;—

XXXVI.

Oh, ye great authors !—"Apropos des bottes,"

I have forgotten what I meant to say,
As sometimes have been greater Sages' lots ;—

'Twas something calculated to allay
All wrath in barracks, palaces, or cots :

Certes it would have been but thrown away,
And that's one comfort for my lost advice,
Although no doubt it was beyond all price.

XXXVII.

But let it go : it will one day be found

With other relics of "a former world,"
When this world shall be *former*, underground,

Thrown topsy-turvy, twisted, crisped, and curled,
Baked, fried, or burnt, turned inside-out, or drowned,

Like all the worlds before, which have been hurled
First out of and then back again to Chaos,
The Superstratum which will overlay us.

XXXVIII.

So Cuvier says ;—and then shall come again

Unto the new Creation, rising out
From our old crash, some mystic, ancient strain

Of things destroyed and left in airy doubt :
Like to the notions we now entertain

Of Titans, Giants, Fellows of about
Some hundred feet in height, *not* to say *miles*,
And Mammoths, and your winged Crocodiles.

N

XXXIX.

Think if then George the Fourth should be dug up!

How the new worldlings of the then new East
Will wonder where such animals could sup!

(For they themselves will be but of the least:
Even worlds miscarry, when too oft they pup,
And every new Creation hath decreased
In size, from overworking the material—
Men are but maggots of some huge Earth's burial).

XL.

How will—to these young people, just thrust out
From some fresh Paradise, and set to plough,
And dig, and sweat, and turn themselves about,
And plant, and reap, and spin, and grind and sow,
'Till all the Arts at length are brought about,
Especially of war and taxing,—how,
I say, will these great relics, when they see 'em,
Look like the monsters of a new Museum.

XLI.

But I am apt to grow too metaphysical:
"The time is out of joint,"—and so am I;
I quite forget this poem's merely quizzical,
And deviate into matters rather dry.
I ne'er decide what I shall say, and this I can
Much too poetical: Men should know why
They write, and for what end; but, note, or text,
I never know the word which will come next.

XLII.

So on I ramble, now and then narrating,

Now pondering:—it is time we should narrate :
I left Don Juan with his horses baiting—

Now we'll get o'er the ground at a great rate.
I shall not be particular in stating

His journey, we've so many tours of late :
Suppose him then at Petersburg ; suppose
That pleasant capital of painted snows ;

XLIII.

Suppose him in an handsome uniform ;

A scarlet coat, black facings, a long plume,
Waving, like sails new shivered in a storm,

Over a cocked hat in a crowded room,
And brilliant breeches, bright as a Cairn Gorme,
Of yellow casimere we may presume,
White stockings drawn uncardled as new milk
O'er limbs whose symmetry set off the silk ;

XLIV.

Suppose him sword by side, and hat in hand,

Made up by Youth, Fame, and an Army tailor—
That great Enchanter, at whose rod's command

Beauty springs forth, and Nature's self turns paler,
Seeing how Art can make her work more grand,

(When she don't pin men's limbs in like a jailor),—
Behold him placed as if upon a pillar ! He
Seems Love turned a Lieutenant of Artillery !

XLV.

His Bandage slipped down into a cravat ;

His wings subdued to epaulettes ; his Quiver
Shrunk to a scabbard, with his arrows at

His side as a small sword, but sharp as ever ;
His Bow converted into a cocked hat ;

But still so like, that Psyche were more clever
Than some wives (who make blunders no less stupid)
If she had not mistaken him for Cupid.

XLVI.

The courtiers stared, the ladies whispered, and

The Empress smiled ; the reigning favourite frowned
I quite forgot which of them was in hand

Just then, as they are rather numerous found,
Who took by turns that difficult command

Since first her Majesty was singly crowned :
But they were mostly nervous six-foot fellows,
All fit to make a Patagonian jealous.

XLVII.

Juan was none of these, but slight and slim,

Blushing and beardless ; and yet ne'ertheless
There was a something in his turn of limb,

And still more in his eye, which seemed to express,
That though he looked one of the Seraphim,

There lurked a Man beneath the Spirit's dress.
Besides, the Empress sometimes liked a boy,
And had just buried the fair-faced Lanskoï. (4)

XLVIII.

No wonder then that Yermoloff, or Momonoff,
 Or Scherbatoff, or any other *off*
 Or *on*, might dread Her Majesty had not room enough
 Within her bosom (which was not too tough)
 For a new flame; a thought to cast of gloom enough
 Along the aspect whether smooth or rough
 Of him who, in the language of his station,
 Then held that "high official situation."

XLIX.

Oh, gentle ladies! should you seek to know
 The import of this diplomatic phrase,
 Bid Ireland's Londonderry's Marquess (5) show
 His parts of speech; and in the strange displays
 Of that odd string of words, all in a row,
 Which none divine, and every one obeys,
 Perhaps you may pick out some queer no meaning,
 Of that weak wordy harvest the sole gleanings.

L.

I think I can explain myself without
 That sad inexplicable beast of prey—
 That Sphinx, whose words could ever be a doubt,
 Did not his deeds unriddle them each day—
 That monstrous Hieroglyphic—that long Spout
 Of blood and water, leaden Castlereagh!
 And here I must an anecdote relate,
 But luckily of no great length or weight.

LI.

An English lady asked of an Italian,
What were the actual and official duties
Of the strange thing, some Women set a value on,
Which hovers oft about some married Beauties,
Called "Cavalier Servente?" a Pygmalion
Whose statues warm (I fear, alas! too true 'tis)
Beneath his Art. The dame, pressed to disclose them,
Said—"Lady, I beseech you to *suppose them.*"

LII.

And thus I supplicate your supposition,
And mildest, Matron-like interpretation
Of the Imperial Favourite's Condition.
'Twas a high place, the highest in the nation,
In fact, if not in rank; and the suspicion
Of any one's attaining to his station,
No doubt gave pain, where each new pair of shoulders,
If rather broad, made stocks rise and their holders.

LIII.

Juan, I said, was a most beauteous Boy,
And had retained his boyish look beyond
The usual hirsute seasons which destroy,
With beards and whiskers and the like, the fond
Parisian aspect which upset old Troy
And founded Doctor's Commons:—I have coined
The history of divorces, which, though chequered,
Calls Ilion's the first damages on record.

LIV.

And Catherine who loved all things (save her lord,
 Who was gone to his place) and passed for much,
 Admiring those (by dainty dames abhorred)
 Gigantic Gentlemen, yet had a touch
 Of Sentiment; and he She most adored
 Was the lamented Lanskoi, who was such
 A lover as had cost her many a tear,
 And yet but made a middling grenadier.

LV.

Oh thou "tetrissima Causa" of all "belli"—
 Thou gate of Life and Death—thou nondescript?
 Whence is our exit and our entrance,—well I
 May pause in pondering how all Souls are dipt
 In thy perennial fountain:—how man *fell*, I
 Know not, since knowledge saw her branches stript
 Of her first fruit; but how he falls and rises
 Since, *Thou* hast settled beyond all surmises.

LVI.

Some call thee "the worst Cause of war," but I
 Maintain thou art the *best*: for after all
 From thee we come, to thee we go, and why
 To get at thee not batter down a wall,
 Or waste a world? Since no one can deny
 Thou dost replenish worlds both great and small:
 With, or without thee, all things at a stand
 Are, or would be, thou Sea of Life's dry Land!

LVII.

Catherine who was the grand Epitome
Of that great Cause of war, or peace, or what
You please (it causes all the things which be,
So you may take your choice of this or that)—
Catherine, I say, was very glad to see
The handsome herald, on whose plumage sat
Victory; and, pausing as she saw him kneel
With his dispatch, forgot to break the seal.

LVIII.

Then recollecting the whole Empress, nor
Forgetting quite the woman (which composed
At least three parts of this great whole) she tore
The letter open with an air which posed
The Court, that watched each look her visage wore.
Until a royal smile at length disclosed
Fair weather for the day. Though rather spacious,
Her face was noble, her eyes fine, mouth gracious.

LIX.

Great joy was hers, or rather joys; the first
Was a ta'en city, thirty thousand slain,
Glory and triumph o'er her aspect burst,
As an East Indian Sunrise on the main.
These quenched a moment her ambition's thirst—
So Arab Deserts drink in Summer's rain:
In vain!—As fall the dews on quenchless sands,
Blood only serves to wash Ambition's hands!

LX:

Her next amusemeⁿt was more fanciful ;

She smiled at mad Suwarrow's rhymes, who threw
Into a Russian couplet rather dull

The whole gazette of thousands whom he slew.

Her third was feminine enough to annul

The shudder which runs naturally through
Our veins, when things called Sovereigns think it best
To kill, and Generals turn it into jest.

LXI.

The two first feelings ran their course complete,

And lighted first her eye and then her mouth :

The whole court looked immediately most sweet

Like flowers well watered after a long drouth :

But when on the Lieutenant at her feet

Her Majesty, who liked to gaze on youth

Almost as much as on a new dispatch,

Glanced mildly, all the world was on the watch.

LXII.

Though somewhat large, exuberant, and truculent,

When *wroth* ; while *pleased*, she was as fine a figure

As those who like things rosy, ripe and succulent,

Would wish to look on, while they are in vigour.

She could repay each amatory look you lent.

With interest, and in turn was wont with rigour

To exact of Cupid's bills the full amount

At sight, nor would permit you to discount.

LXIII.

With her the latter, though at times convenient,
 Was not so necessary; for they tell
 That she was handsome, and though fierce looked le-
 And always used her favourites too well. [nient,
 If once beyond her boudoir's precincts in ye went,
 Your "Fortune" was in a fair way "to swell
 A man" (as Giles says ;) (6) for though she would wt
 Nations, she liked Man as an individual. [dow all

LXIV.

What a strange thing is man ! and what a stranger
 Is woman ! What a whirlwind is her head,
 And what a whirl-pool full of depth and danger
 Is all the rest about her ! Whether wed,
 Or widow, maid, or mother, she can change her
 Mind like the wind : whatever she has said
 Or done, is light to what she'll say or do ;—
 The oldest thing on record, and yet new !

LXV.

Oh Catherine ! (for of all Interjections,
 To thee both *oh* ! and *ah* ! belong of right
 In love and war) how odd are the connections
 Of human thoughts, which jostle in their flight !
 Just now *your's* were cut out in different sections :
First Ismail's capture caught your fancy quite ;
Next of new knights, the fresh and glorious batch ;
And thirdly he who brought you the dispatch.

LXVI.

Shakespeare talks of "the Herald Mercury
 "New lighted on a Heaven-kissing hill:"
 And some such visions crossed her Majesty,
 While her young Herald knelt before her still.
 'Tis very true the hill seemed rather high,
 For a lieutenant to climb up; but skill [ing
 Smoothed even the Simplon's steep, and by God's bless-
 With Youth and Health all kisses are "heaven-kissing."

LXVII.

Her Majesty looked down, the Youth looked up—
 And so they fell in love;—She with his face,
 His Grace, his God-knows what: for Cupid's cup
 With the first draught intoxicates apace,
 A quintessential laudanum or "black drop,"
 Which makes one drunk at once, without the base
 Expedient of full bumpers; for the eye
 In love drinks all life's fountains (save tears) dry.

LXVIII.

He, on the other hand, if not in in love,
 Fell into that no less imperious passion,
 Self-love—which, when some sort of Thing above
 Ourselves, a singer, dancer, much in fashion,
 Or duchess, princess, Empress, "deigns to prove"
 ('Tis Pope's phrase) a great longing, though a rash one,
 For one especial person out of many,
 Makes us believe ourselves as good as any.

LXIX.

Besides, he was of that delighted age
Which makes all female ages equal—when
We don't much care with whom we may engage,
As bold as Daniel in the Lion's den,
So that we can our native Sun assuage
In the next Ocean, which may flow just then,
To make a twilight in, just as Sol's heat is
Quenched in the lap of the salt Sea, or Thetis.

LXX.

And Catherine (we must say thus much for Catherine)
Though bold and bloody, was the kind of thing
Whose temporary Passion was quite flattering,
Because each lover looked a sort of king
Made up upon an amatory pattern,
A royal husband in all save the ring—
Which, being the damned'st part of matrimony,
Seemed taking out the sting to leave the honey.

LXXI.

And when you add to this her womanhood
In its meridian, her blue eyes, or grey—
(The last, if they have soul, are quite as good,
Or better, as the best examples say :
Napoleon's, Mary's (Queen of Scotland) should
Lend to that colour a transcendant ray ;
And Pallas also sanctions the same hue,
Too wise to look through Optics black or blue)—

LXXII.

Her sweet smile, and her then majestic figure,
 Her plumpness, her imperial condescension,
 Her preference of a boy to men much bigger,
 (Fellows whom Messalina's self would pension)
 Her prime of life, just now in juicy vigour,
 With other *extras*, which we need not mention,—
 Al these, or any one of these, explain
 Enough to make a stripling very vain.

LXXIII.

And that's enough, for love is vanity,
 Selfish in its beginning as its end,
 Except where 'tis a mere Insanity,
 A Maddening Spirit which would strive to blend
 Itself with Beauty's frail Inanity,
 On which the passion's self seems to depend:
 And hence some heathenish philosophers
 Make Love the Main Spring of the Universe.

LXXIV.

Besides Platonic love, besides the love
 Of God, the love of Sentiment, the Loving
 Of faithful pairs—(I needs must rhyme with dove,
 That good old steam-boat, which keeps verses moving
 'Gainst Reason—Reason ne'er was hand-and-glove
 With rhyme—but always leant less to improving
 The sound than sense)—besides all these pretences
 To Love, there are those things which Words name
 O [Senses;

LXXV.

Those movements, those improvements in or bodies,
Which make all bodies anxious to get out
Of their own sand-pits, to mix with a Goddess,
For such all Women are at first no doubt.
How beautiful that moment! and how odd is
That fever which precedes the languid rout
Of our Sensations; What a curious way
The whole thing is of clothing souls in clay!

LXXVI.

The noblest kind of Love is Love Platonical,
To end or to begin with; the next grand
Is that which may be christened Love Canonical,
Because the clergy take the thing in hand;
The third'sort to be noted in our Chronicle
As flourishing in every Christian land,
Is, when chaste Matrons to their other ties
Add what may be called *Marriage in Disguise*.

LXXVII.

Well, we won't analyse—our story must
Tell for itself: the Sovereign was smitten,
Juan much flattered by her love, or lust;
I cannot stop to alter words once written,
And the two are so mixed with human dust,
That he who *names one*, both perchance may hit on;
But in such matters Russia's mighty Empress
Behaved no better than a common Sempstress.

LXXVIII.

The whole Court melted into one wide whisper,
 And all lips were applied unto all ears !
 The elder Ladies' wrinkles curled much crisper
 As they beheld ; the younger cast some leers
 On one another, and each lovely lisper
 Smiled as she talked the matter o'er ; but tears
 Of rivalship rose in each clouded eye
 Of all the standing army who stood by.

LXXIX.

All the Ambassadors of all the Powers
 Inquired, Who was this very new young man,
 Who promised to be great in some few hours ?
 Which is full soon (though life is but a span.)
 Already they beheld the silver showers
 Of roubles rain, as fast as specie can,
 Upon his Cabinet, besides the presents
 Of several ribbons and some thousand peasants.

LXXX.

Catherine was generous,—all such ladies are :
 Love, that great opener of the heart and all
 The ways that lead there, be they near or far,
 Above, below, by turnpikes great or small,—
 Love—(though she had a cursed taste for war,
 And was not the best wife, unless we call
 Such Clytemnestra, though perhaps 'tis better
 That one should die, than two drag on the fetter)—

LXXXI.

Love had made Catherine make each lover's fortune,
Unlike our own half-chaste Elizabeth,
Whose avarice all disbursement did importune,
If history, the grand liar, ever saith
The truth; and though Grief her old age might shorten
Because she put a favourite to death,
Her vile, ambiguous method of flirtation,
And Stinginess, disgrace her sex and station.

LXXXII.

But when the levee rose, and all was bustle
In the dissolving circle, all the nations'
Ambassadors began as 'twere to hustle
Round the young man with their congratulations.
Also the softer silks were heard to rustle
Of gentle dames, among whose recreations
It is to speculate on handsome faces,
Especially when such lead to high places.

LXXXIII.

Juan, who found himself, he knew not how,
A general object of attention, made
His answers with a very graceful bow,
As if born for the Ministerial trade.
Though modest, on his unembarrassed brow
Nature had written "gentlemen." He said
Little, but to the purpose; and his manner
Flung hovering Graces o'er him like a banner.

LXXXIV.

An order from her Majesty consigned
Our young Lieutenant to the genial care
Of those in office : all the world looked kind
(As it will look sometimes with the first stare,
Which youth would not act ill to keep in mind)
As also did Miss Protasoff then there,
Named from her mystic office "l'Epronveuse,"
A term inexplicable to the Muse.

LXXXV.

With *her* then, as in humble duty bound,
Juan retired,—and so will I, until
My Pegasus shall tire of touching ground.
We have just lit on a "Heaven-kissing-hill,"
So lofty that I feel my brain turn round,
And all my fancies whirling like a mill ;
Which is a signal to my nerves and brain,
To take a quiet ride in some green lane.

END OF CANTO NINTH.

DON JUAN.

CANTO X.

I.

WHEN Newton saw an apple fall, he found
In that slight startle from his contemplation—
'Tis *said* (for I'll not answer above ground
For any sage's creed or calculation—)
A mode of proving that the earth turned round
In a most natural whirl, called "Gravitation;"
And this is the sole mortal who could grapple,
Since Adam, with a fall, or with an apple.

II.

Man fell with apples, and with apples rose,
If this be true; for we must deem the mode
In which Sir Isaac Newton could disclose
Through the then unpaved stars the turnpike road,
A thing to counterbalance human woes:
For ever since immortal man hath glowed
With all kinds of mechanics, and full soon
Steam-engines will conduct him to the Moon.

III.

And wherefore this exordium?—Why, just now,
In taking up this paltry sheet of paper,
My bosom underwent a glorious glow,
And my internal Spirit cut a caper :
And though so much inferior, as I know,
To those who, by the dint of glass and vapour,
Discover stars, and sail in the wind's eye,
I wish to do as much by Poesy.

IV.

In the Wind's Eye I have sailed, and sail ; but for
The stars, I own my telescope is dim ;
But at the least I have shunned the common shore,
And leaving land far out of sight, would skim
The Ocean of Eternity : the roar
Of Breakers has not daunted my slight, trim,
But *still* sea-wotthy skiff ; and she may float
Where ships have foundered, as doth many a boat.

V.

We left our hero, Juan, in the *bloom*
Of favouritism, but not yet in the *blush* ;—
And far be it from my *Muses* to presume
(For I have more than one Muse at a push)
To follow him beyond the drawing-room :
It is enough that Fortune found him flush
Of youth, and vigour, beauty, and those things
Which for an instant clip Enjoyment's wings.

VI.

But soon they grow again and leave their nest.

“ Oh !” saith the Psalmist, “ that I had a dove’s
Pinions to flee away, and be at rest !”

And who that recollects young years and loves,—
Though hoary now, and with a withering breast,

And palsied Fancy, which no longer roves [rather
Beyond its dimmed eye’s Sphere,—but would much
Sigh like his son, than cough like his grandfather ?

VII.

But sighs subside, and tears (even widows’) shrink,

Like Arno in the summer, to a shallow,
So narrow as to shame their wintry brink,

Which threatens inundations deep and yellow !
Such difference doth a few months make. You’d think
Grief a rich field which never would lie fallow ;
No more it doth, its ploughs but change their boys,
Who furrow some new soil to sow for joys.

VIII.

But coughs will come when sighs depart—and now

And then before sighs cease ; for oft the one
Will bring the other, ere the lake-like brow

Is ruffled by a wrinkle, or the Sun
Of life reached ten o’clock : and while a glow,
Hectic and brief as summer’s day nigh done,
O’er-spreads the cheek which seems too pure for clay,
Thousands blaze, love, hope, die,—how happy they !—

IX.

But Juan was not meant to die so soon.

We left him in the focus of such glory

As may be won by favour of the Moon

Or ladies fancies—rather transitory

Perhaps; but who would scorn the month of June,

Because December, with his breath so hoary,
Must come? Much rather should he court the ray,
To hoard up warmth against a wintry day.

X.

Besides, he had some qualities which fix

Middle-aged ladies even more than young:

The former know what's what; while new-fledg'd chicks

Know little more of love than what is sung

In rhymes, or dreamt (for fancy will play tricks)

In visions of those skies from whence Love sprung.
Some reckon women by their suns or years,
I rather think the Moon should date the dears.

XI.

And why? because she's changeable and chaste.

I know no other reason, whatsoe'er
Suspicious people, who find fault in haste,

May choose to tax me with; which is not fair,
Nor flattering to their "temper or their taste,"

As my friend Jeffery writes with such an air:
However, I forgive him, and I trust
He will forgive himself—if not, I must.

XII.

Old enemies who have become new friends
Should so continue—'tis a point of honour ;
And I know nothing which could make amends
For a return to hatred: I would shun her
Like Garlick, howsoever she extends
Her hundred arms and legs, and fain outrun her.
Old flames, new wives, become our bitterest foes—
Converted foes should scorn to join with those

XIII.

This were the worst desertion:—renegadoes,
Even shuffling Southey, that incarnate lie,
Would scarcely join again the “ reformadoes,” (7)
Whom he forsook to fill the Laureate's sty :
And honest men from Iceland to Barbadoes,
Whether in Caledon or Italy,
Should not vere round with every breath, nor seize
To pain, the moment when you cease to please.

XIV.

The lawyer and the critic but behold
The baser sides of literature and life,
And nought remains unseen, but much untold,
By those who scour those double vales of strife.
While common men grow ignorantly old,
The lawyer's brief is like the surgeon's knife,
Dissecting the whole inside of a question,
And with it all the process of digestion.

XV.

A legal broom's a moral chimney-sweeper,
And that's the reason he himself's so dirty ;
The endless soot (8) bestows a tint far deeper
Than can be hid by altering his shirt ; he
Retains the sable stains of the dark creeper,
At least some twenty-nine do out of thirty,
In all their habits ;—not so *you*, I own :
As Cæsar wore his robe you wear your gown.

XVI.

And all our little feuds, at least all *mine*,
Dear Jeffery, once my most redoubted foe,
(As far as rhyme and criticism combine
To make such puppets of us things below)
Are over : Here's a health to "Auld Lang Syne !"
I do not know you, and may never know
Your face—but you have acted on the whole
Most nobly, and I own it from my soul.

XVII.

And when I use the phrase of "Auld Lang Syne !"
'Tis not addressed to you—the more's the pity
For me, for I would rather take my wine
With you, than aught (save Scott) in your proud city.
But somehow,—it may seem a schoolboy's whine,
And yet I seek not to be grand nor witty,
But I am half a Scot by birth, and bred
A whole one and my heart flies to my head.

XVIII.

As "Auld Lang Syne" brings Scotland, one and all,
Scotch plaids, Scotch noods, the blue hills, and clear
streams,

The Dee, the Don, Balgounie's Brig's *black wall*, (9)

All my boy feelings, all my gentler dreams
Of what I *then dreamt*, clothed in their own pall,
Like Banquo's offspring;—floating past me seems
My childhood in this childishness of mine:
I care not—'tis a glimpse of "Auld Lang Syne."

XIX.

And though, as you remember, in a fit
Of wrath and rhyme, when juvenile and curly,
I railed at Scots to show my wrath and wit,
Which must be owned was sensitive and surly,
Yet 'tis in vain such sallies to permit,
They cannot quench young feelings fresh and early:
I "*scotched* not killed" the Scotchman in my blood,
And love the land of "mountain and of flood."

XX.

Don Juan, who was real or ideal,—
For both are much the same, since what men think
Exists when the once thinkers are less real
Than what they thought, for mind can never sink,
And 'gainst the body makes a strong appeal;
And yet 'tis very puzzling, on the brink,
Of what is called Eternity, to stare,
And know no more of what is here, than there;—

XXI.

Don Juan grew a very polished Russian—

How we wont mention, *why* we need not say:
Few youthful minds can stand the strong concussion
Of any slight temptation in their way;
But *his* just now were spread as is a cushion
Smoothed for a monarch's seat of honour: gay
Damsels, and dances, revels, ready money,
Made ice seem paradise, and winter sunny.

XXII.

The favour of the Empress was agreeable;
And though the duty waxed a little hard,
Young people at his time of life should be able
To come off handsomely in that regard.
He now was growing up like a green tree, able
For love, war, or ambition, which reward
Their luckier votaries, till old Age's tedium
Make some prefer the circulating medium.

XXIII.

About this time, as might have been anticipated,
Seduced by youth and dangerous examples,
Don Juan grew, I fear, a little dissipated;
Which is a sad thing, and not only tramples
On our fresh feelings,—but as being participated
With all kinds of incorrigible samples
Of frail humanity—must make us selfish,
And shut our souls up in us like a shell-fish.

XXIV.

This we pass over. We will also pass
 The usual progress of intrigues between
 Unequal matches, such as are, alas !
 A young Lieutenant's with a *not old* Queen,
 But one who is not so youthful as she was
 In all the royalty of sweet seventeen.
 Sovereigns may sway materials, but not matter,
 And wrinkles, the d——d democrats, won't flatter.

XXV.

And Death, the sovereign's Sovereign, though the great
 Gracchus of all mortality, who levels
 With his *Agrarian* laws, the high estate
 Of him who feasts, and fights, and roars, and revels,
 To one small grass-grown patch (which must await
 Corruption for its crop) with the poor devils
 Who never had a foot of land till now,—
 Death's a reformer, all men must allow.

XXVI.

He liv'd (not Death, but Juan) in a hurry
 Of waste, and haste, and glare, and gloss, and glitter,
 In this gay clime of bear-skins black and furry—
 Which (though I hate to say a thing that's bitter)
 Peep out sometimes, when things are in a flurry,
 Through all the "purple and fine linen," fitter
 For Babylon's than Russia's royal harlot—
 And neutralize her outward show of Scarlet.

XXVII.

And this same state we won't describe : we would
 Perhaps from hearsay, or from recollection ;
 But getting nigh grim Dante's " obscure wood,"
 That horrid Equinox, that hateful section
 Of human years, that half-way house, that rude
 Hut, whence wise travellers drive with circumspection
 Life's sad post horses o'er the dreary frontier
 Of age, and looking back to youth, give *one* tear ;—

XXVIII.

I won't describe—that is, if I can help
 Description ; and I won't reflect—that is,
 If I can stave off thought, which—as a whelp
 Clings to its teat—sticks to me through the abyss
 Of this odd labyrinth ; or as the kelp
 Holds by the rock ; or as a lover's kiss
 Drains its first draught of lips :—but, as I said,
 I *won't* philosophize, and *will* be read.

XXIX.

Juan, instead of courting courts, was courted,
 A thing which happens rarely ; this he owed
 Much to his youth, and much to his reported
 Valour ; much also to the blood he showed,
 Like a race-horse ; much to each dress he sported,
 Which set the beauty off in which he glowed,
 As purple clouds befringe the sun ; but most
 He owed to an old woman and his post.

XXX.

He wrote to Spain :—and all his near relations,
Perceiving he was in a handsome way
Of getting on himself, and finding stations
For cousins also, answered the same day.
Several prepared themselves for emigrations,
And eating ices, were o'erheard to say,
That with the addition of a slight pelisse,
Madrid's and Moscow's climes were of a piece.

XXXI.

His Mother, Donna Inez, finding too
That in the lieu of drawing on his banker,
Where his assets were waxing rather few,
He had brought his spending to a handsome anchor,—
Replied, “ that she was glad to see him through
“ Those pleasures after which wild youth will hanker ;
“ As the sole sign of man's being in his senses
“ Is, learning to reduce his past expences.

XXXII.

“ She also recommended him to God,
“ And no less to God's son, as well as Mother,
“ Warned him against Greek worship, which looks odd
“ In Catholic eyes ; but told him too to smother
“ *Outward* dislike, which don't look well abroad ;
“ Informed him that he had a little brother
“ Born in a second wedlock ; and above
“ All, praised the Empress's *maternal* love.

XXXIII.

" She could not too much give her approbation
 " Unto an Empress, who preferred young men
 " Whose age, and what was better still, whose nation
 " And climate, stopped all scandal (now and then) :—
 " At home it might have given her some vexation ;
 " But where thermometers sunk down to ten,
 " Or five, or one, or zero, she could never
 " Believe that virtue thawed before the river."

XXXIV.

Oh for a *forty-parson power*, (10) to chaunt
 Thy praise, Hypocrisy ! Oh for a hymn
 Loud as the virtues thou dost nobly vaunt,
 Not practise ! Oh for trumps of cherubim !
 Or the ear-trumpet of my good old Aunt,
 Who, though her spectacles at last grew dim,
 Drew quiet consolation through its hint,
 When she no more could read the pious print.

XXXV.

She was no hypocrite at least, poor soul, .
 But went to heaven in as sincere a way
 As any body on the Elected Roll,
 Which portions out upon the judgment day
 Heaven's freeholds, in a sort of doomsday scroll,
 Such as the conqueror William did repay
 His knights with, lotting others' properties
 Into some sixty thousand new knights' fees

XXXVI.

I can't complain, whose ancestors are there,
Erneis, Radulphus—eight-and-forty manors
(If that my memory doth not greatly err)
Were their reward for following Billy's banners ;
And though I can't help thinking 'twas scarce fair
To strip the Sāxons of their *hydes*, like tanners ; (11)
Yet as they founded churches with the produce,
You'll deem, no doubt, they put it to a good use.

XXXVII.

The gentle Juan flourished, though at times
He felt like other plants, called Sensitive,
Which shrink from touch, as monarchs do from rhymes,
Save such as Southey can afford to give.
Perhaps he longed in bitter frosts for climes
In which the Neva's ice would cease to live
Before May-day : perhaps, despite his duty,
In royalty's vast arms he sigh'd for beauty :

XXXVIII.

Perhaps,—but sans perhaps, we need not seek
For causes young or old : the canker worm
Will feed upon the fairest, freshest cheek,
As well as further drain the withered form :
Care, like a house-keeper, brings every week
His bills in, and however we may storm,
They must be paid : though six days smoothly run,
The seventh will bring blue devils, or a dun.

XXXIX.

I don't know how it was, but he grēw sick:
 The Empress was alarmed, and her physician
 ('The same who physicked Peter) found the tick
 Of his fierce pulse betoken a condition
 Which augured of the dead, however *quick*
 Itself, and showed a feverish disposition;
 At which the whole court was extremely troubled,
 The sovereign shocked, and all his medicines doubled.

XL.

Low were the whispers; manifold the rumours;
 Some said he had been poisoned by Potemkin;
 Others talked learnedly of certain tumours,
 Exhaustion, or disorders of the same kin;
 Some said 'twas a decoction of the humours,
 Which with the blood too readily will claim kin;
 Others again were ready to maintain,
 "'Twas only the fatigue of last campaign."

XLI.

But here is one prescription out of many:
 "Sodæ-Sulphat. 3. vi. 3. s. Mannæ optim.
 "Aq. fervent. F. 3. ifs. 3ij. tinct. Sennæ [him)
 "Haustus" (and here the surgeon came and cupped
 "R. Pulv. Com. gr. iiii. Ipecacuanhæ"
 (With more beside, if Juan had not stopped 'em),
 "Bolus Potassæ Sulphuret. sumendus,
 "Et Haustus ter in die capiendus."

XLII.

This is the way physicians mend or end us,
Secundum artem: but although we sneer
In health—when ill, we call them to attend us,
Without the least propensity to jeer:
While that “hiatus maxime defendus”
To be filled up by spade or mattocks near,
Instead of gliding graciously down Lethe,
We tease mild Baillie, or soft Abernethy.

XLIII.

Juan demurred at this first notice to
Quit; and though Death had threatened an ejection,
His youth and constitution bore him through,
And sent the doctors in a new direction.
But still his state was delicate: the hue
Of health but flickered with a faint reflection
Along his wasted cheek, and seemed to gravel
The Faculty—who said that he must travel.

XLIV.

The climate was too cold, they said, for him,
Meridian born, to bloom in. This opinion
Made the chaste Catherine look a little grim,
Who did not like at first to lose her minion:
But when she saw his dazzling eye wax dim,
And drooping like an eagle's with clipt pinion,
She then resolved to send him on a mission,
But in a style becoming his condition.

XLV.

There was just then a kind of a discussion,
A sort of treaty or negotiation
Between the British cabinet and Russian,
Maintained with all the due prevarication
With which great states such things are apt to push on;
Something about the Baltic's navigation,
Hides, train-oil, tallow, and the rights of Thetis,
Which Britons deem their "uti possidetis."

XLVI.

So Catherine, who had a handsome way
Of fitting out her favourites, conferred
This secret charge on Juan, to display
At once her royal splendour, and reward
His services. He kissed hands the next day,
Received instruction how to play his cards,
Was laden with all kinds of gifts and honours,
Which showed what great discernment was the donor's.

XLVII.

But she was lucky, and luck's all. Your Queens
Are generally prosperous in reigning;
Which puzzles us to know what Fortune means.
But to continue : though her years were waning,
Her climacteric teased her like her teens ;
And though her dignity brooked no complaining,
So much did Juan's setting off distress her,
She could not find at first a fit successor.

XLVIII.

But Time the comforter will come at last ;
And four-and-twenty hours, and twice that number
Of candidates requesting to be placed,
Made Catherine taste next night a quiet slumber :
Not that she meant to fix again in haste,
Nor did she find the quantity encumber,
But always choosing with deliberation,
Kept the place open for their emulation.

XLIX.

While this high post of honour's in abeyance
For one or two days, reader, we request
You'll mount with our young hero the conveyance
Which wafted him from Petersburg : the best
Barouche, which had the glory to display once
The fair Czarina's Autocratic crest,
When, a new Iphigene, she went to Tauris,
Was given to her favourite, (12) and now *bore his*.

L.

A bull-dog, and a bullfinch, and an ermine,
All private favourites of Don Juan ;—for
(Let deeper sages the true cause determine)
He had a kind of inclination, or
Weakness, for what most people deem mere vermin,
Live animals : an old maid of threescore
For cats and birds more penchant ne'er display'd,
Although he was not old, nor even a maid.

LI.

The animals aforesaid occupied

Their station : there were valets, secretaries,
In other vehicles; but at his side

Sat little Leila, who survived the parries
He made 'gainst Cossacque sabres, in the wide
Slaughter of Ismail. Though my wild Muse varies
Her note, she don't forget the infant girl
Whom he preserved, a pure and living pearl.

LII.

Poor little thing! She was as fair as docile,

And with that gentle, serious character,
As rare in living beings as a fossile [vier!]

Man, 'midst thy mouldy Mammoths, "grand Cu-
Ill fitted was her ignorance to jostle

With this o'erwhelming world, where all must err :
But she was yet but ten years old, and therefore
Was tranquil, though she knew not why or wherefore.

LIII.

Don Juan loved her, and she loved him, as

Nor brother, father, sister, daughter love,
I cannot tell exactly what it was ;

He was not yet quite old enough to prove
Parental feelings, and the other class,

Called brotherly affection, could not move
His bosom,—for he never had a sister :

Ah ! if he had, how much he would have missed her !

LIV.

And still less was it sensual ; for besides
 That he was not an antient debauchee,
 (Who like sour fruit, to stir their veins' salt tides,
 As Acids rouse a dormant Alkali),
 Although (*'twill* happen as our planet guides)
 His youth was not the chastest that might be,
 There was the purest platonism at bottom
 Of all his feelings—only he forgot 'em.

LV.

Just now there was no peril of temptation ;
 He loved the infant orphan he had saved,
 As Patriots (now and then) may love a nation ;
 His pride too felt that she was not enslaved
 Owing to him ;—as also her salvation
 Through his means and the church's might be paved .
 But one thing's odd, which here must be inserted,
 The little Turk refused to be converted.

LVI.

'Twas strange enough she should retain the impression
 Thro' such a scene of change, and dread, and slaughter
 But though three bishops told her the transgression,
 She showed a great dislike to holy water ;
 She also had no passion for confession ;
 Perhaps she had nothing to confess :—no matter ;
 Whate'er the cause, the church made little of it—
 She still held out that Mahomet was a prophet.

Q

LVII.

In fact, the only Christian she could bear
 Was Juan ; whom she seemed to have selected
 In place of what her home and friends once *were*.
 He *naturally* loved what he protected :
 And thus they formed a rather curious pair,
 A guardian green in years, a ward connected
 In neither clime, time, blood, with her defender ;
 And yet this want of ties made theirs more tender.

LVIII.

They journeyed on through Poland and through Warsaw,
 Famous for mines of salt and yokes of iron :
 Through Courland also, which that famous farce saw
 Which gave her dukes the graceless name of "Biron." (13)
 'Tis the same landscape which the modern Mars saw,
 Who marched to Moscow, led by Fame, the syren !
 To lose by one month's frost some twenty years
 Of conquest, and his guards of grenadiers.

LIX.

Let this not seem an anti-climax :—" Oh ! [Clay-
 " My guard ! my old guard !" exclaimed that God of
 Think of the Thunderer's falling down below
 Carotid-artery-cutting Castlereagh !
 Alas ! that glory should be chilled by snow !
 But should we wish to warm us on our way
 Through Poland, there is Kosciusko's name
 Might scatter fire through ice, like Hecla's flame.

LX.

From Poland they came on through Prussia Proper,
And Königsberg the capital, whose vaunt,
Besides some veins of iron, lead, or copper,
Has lately been the great Professor Kant.
Juan, who cared not a tobacco-stopper
About philosophy, pursued his jaunt
To Germany, whose somewhat tardy millions
Have princes who spur more than their postillions.

LXI.

And thence through Berlin, Dresden, and the like,
Until he reached the castellated Rhine :—
Ye glorious Gothic scenes ! how much ye strike
All phantasies, not even excepting mine :
A grey wall, a green ruin, rusty pike,
Make my soul pass the equinoctial line
Between the present and past worlds, and hover
Upon their airy confine, half-seas-over.

LXII.

But Juan posted on through Manheim, Bonn,
Which Drachenfels frowns over like a spectre
Of the good feudal times for ever gone,
On which I have not time just now to lecture.
From thence he was drawn onwards to Cologne,
A city which presents to the inspector
Eleven thousand Maidenheads of bone,
The greatest number Flesh hath ever known. (14)

LXIII.

From thence to Holland's Hague and Helvoetsluys,
That water-land of Dutchmen and of ditches,
Where juniper expresses its best juice,
The poor man's sparkling substitute for riches.
Senates and sages have condemned its use—
But to deny the mob a cordial, which is
Too often all the clothing, meat or fuel
Good government has left them, seems but cruel.

LXIV.

Here he embarked, and with a flowing sail
Went bounding for the island of the free,
Towards which the impatient wind blew half a gale:
High dashed the spray, the bows dipped in the sea,
And sea-sick passengers turned somewhat pale;
But Juan, seasoned, as he well might be
By former voyages, stood to watch the skiffs
Which passed, or catch the first glimpse of the cliffs.

LXV.

At length they rose, like a white wall along
The blue sea's border; and Don Juan felt—
What even young strangers feel a little strong
At the first sight of Albion's chalky belt—
A kind of pride that he should be among
Those haughty shop-keepers, who sternly dealt
Their goods and edicts out from pole to pole,
And made the very billows pay them toll.

LXVI.

I have no great cause to love that spot of earth,
Which holds what *might have been* the noblest nation ;
But though I owe it little but my birth,
I feel a mixed regret and veneration
For its decaying fame and former worth.

Seven years (the usual term of transportation)
Of absence, lay one's old resentments level,
When a man's country's going to the devil.

LXVII.

Alas ! could She but fully, truly, know
How her great name is now throughout abhorred ;
How eager all the earth is for the blow
Which shall lay bare her bosom to the sword ;
How all the nations deem her their worst foe,
That worse than *worst of foes*, the once adored
False friend, who held out freedom to mankind,
And now would chain them, to the very mind !—

LXVIII.

Would she be proud, or boast herself the free,
Who is but first of slaves ? The nations are
In prison,—but the jailor, what is he ?
No less a victim to the bolt and bar.
Is the poor privilege to turn the key
Upon the captive, freedom ? He's as far
From the enjoyment of the earth and air
Who watches o'er the chain, as they who wear.

LXIX.

Don Juan now saw Albion's earliest beauties,
 Thy cliffs, *dear* Dover! harbour, and hotel;
 Thy custom-house, with all its delicate duties;
 Thy waiters running mucks at every bell;
 Thy packets, all whose passengers are booties
 To those who upon land or water dwell;
 And last, not least, to strangers uninstructed,
 Thy long, long bills, whence nothing is deducted.

LXX.

Juan, though careless, young, and magnifique,
 And rich in rubles, diamonds, cash, and credit,
 Who did not limit much his bills per week,
 Yet stared at this a little, though he paid it,—
 (His *Maggior Duomo*, a smart, subtle Greek,
 Before him summed the awful scroll and read it:)
 But doubtless as the air, though seldom sunny,
 Is free, the respiration's worth the money.

LXXI.

On with the horses! Off to Canterbury! [puddle;
 Tramp, trampo'er pebble, and splash, splash through
 Hurrah! how swiftly speeds the post so merry!
 Not like slow Germany, wherein they muddle
 Along the road as if they went to bury
 Their fare; and also pause besides, to fuddle
 With "schnapps"—sad dogs! whom "Hundsfo't" or "Fer-
 Affect no more than lightning a conductor. [flucter"]

LXXII.

Now there is nothing gives a man such spirits,
Leavening his blood as cayenne doth a curry,
As going at full speed—no matter where its
Direction be, so 'tis but in a hurry,
And merely for the sake of its own merits :
For the less cause there is for all this flurry,
The greater is the pleasure in arriving
At the great *end* of travel—which is driving.

LXXIII.

They saw at Canterbury the Cathedral;
Black Edward's helm, and Becket's bloody stone,
Were pointed out as usual by the Bedral,
In the same quaint, uninterested tone:—
There's Glory again for you, gentle Reader ! All
Ends in a rusty casque and dubious bone,
Half-solved into those sodas or magnesias,
Which form that bitter draught, the human species.

LXXIV.

The effect on Juan was of course sublime :
He breathed a thousand Cressys, as he saw
That casque, which never stooped except to Time.
Even the bold Churchman's tomb excited awe,
Who died in the then great attempt to climb
O'er kings, who *now* at least *must talk* of law,
Before they butcher. Little Leila gazed,
And asked why such a structure had been raised :

LXXV.

And being told it was "God's house," she said

He was well lodged, but only wondered how
He suffered Infidels in his homestead,

The cruel Nazarenes, who had laid low
His holy temples in the lands which bred

The True Believers;—and her infant brow
Was bent with grief that Mahomet should resign
A mosque so noble, flung like pearls to swine.

LXXVI.

On, on, through meadows, managed like a garden,

A Paradise of hops and high production;

For after years of travel by a bard in

Countries of greater heat but lesser suction,

A green field is a sight which makes him pardon

The absence of that more sublime construction,
Which mixes up vines, olives, precipices,
Glaciers, volcanos, oranges, and ices.

LXXVII.

And when I think upon a pot of beer——

But I wont weep !—and so drive on, postillions!

As the smart boys spurred fast in their career,

Juan admired these highways of free millions;

A country in all senses the most dear

To foreigner or native, save some silly ones,

Who "kick against the pricks" just at this juncture,
And for their pains get only a fresh puncture.

LXXVIII.

What a delightful thing's a turnpike road !
So smooth, so level, such a mode of shaving
The earth, as scarce the eagle in the broad
Air can accomplish, with his wide wings waving.
Had such been cut in Phaeton's time, the God
Had told his son to satisfy his craving
With the York mail ;—but onward as we roll,
“ Surgit amari aliquid ”—the toll !

LXXIX.

Alas ! how deeply painful is all payment !
Take lives, take wives, take aught except men's purses.
As Machiavel shows those in purple raiment,
Such is the shortest way to general curses.
They hate a murderer much less than a claimant
On that sweet ore which every body nurses.—
Kill a man's family, and he may brook it,
But keep your hands out of his breeches' pocket.

LXXX.

So said the Florentine : ye monarchs, hearken
To your instructor. Juan now was borne,
Just as the day began to wane and darken,
O'er the high hill, which looks with pride or scorn
Toward the great city.—Ye who have a spark in
Your veins of Cockney spirit, smile or mourn
According as you take things well or ill,—
Bold Britons, we are now on Shooter's Hill !

LXXXI.

The sun went down, the smoke rose up, as from
A half-unquenched volcano, o'er a space
Which well beseeemed the "Devil's drawing room,"
As some have qualified that wondrous place.
But Juan felt, though not approaching *home*,
As one who, though he were not of the race,
Revered the soil, of those true sons the mother,
Who butchered half the world, and bullied t'other. (15)

LXXXII.

A mighty mass of brick, and smoke, and shipping,
Dirty and dusky, but as wide as eye
Could reach, with here and there a sail just skipping
In sight, then lost amidst the forresty
Of masts; a wilderness of steeples peeping
On tiptoe through their sea-coal canopy;
A huge, dun cupola, like a foolscap crown
On a fool's head—and there is London Town!

LXXXIII.

But Juan saw not this: each wreath of smoke
Appeared to him but as the magic vapour
Of some alchymic furnace, from whence broke
The wealth of worlds (a wealth of tax and paper:)
The gloomy clouds, which o'er it as a yoke
Are bowed, and put the sun out like a taper,
Were nothing but the natural atmosphere,
Extremely wholesome, though but rarely clear.

LXXXIV.

He paused—and so will I; as doth a crew
Before they give their broadside. By and by,
My gentle countrymen, we will renew
Our old acquaintance; and at last I'll try
To tell you truths *you* will not take as true,
Because they are so;—a male Mrs. Fry,
With a soft hesom will I sweep your halls,
And brush a web or two from off the walls.

LXXXV.

Oh Mrs. Fry! Why go to Newgate? Why
Preach to poor rogues? And wherefore not begin
With C—lt—n, or with other houses? Try
Your hand at hardened and imperial sin.
To mend the people's an absurdity,
A jargon, a mere philanthropic din,
Unless you make their betters better:—Fie!
I thought you had more religion, Mrs. Fry.

LXXXVI.

Teach them the decencies of good threescore;
Cure them of tours, hussar and highland dresses;
Tell them that youth once gone returns no more,
That hired huzzas redeem no land's distresses;
Tell them Sir W—ll—m C—t—s is a bore,
Too dull even for the dullest of excesses,
The witless Falstaff of a hoary Hal,
A fool whose bells have ceased to ring at all.

LXXXVII.

Tell them, though it may be perhaps too late
On life's worn confine, jaded, bloated, sated,
To set up vain pretences of being great,
'Tis not so to be good ; and be it stated,
The worthiest kings have ever lov'd least state ;
And tell them—but you won't, and I have prated
Just now enough ; but by and by I'll prattle
Like Roland's horn in Roncesvalles' battle.

END OF CANTO THE TENTH.



DON JUAN.

CANTO XI.

I.

WHEN Bishop Berkeley said, "there was no matter,"
And proved it—'twas no matter what he said:
They say his system 'tis in vain to batter,
Too subtle for the airiest human head;
And yet who can believe it? I would shatter
Gladly all matters down to stone or lead,
Or adamant, to find the World a spirit,
And wear my head, denying that I wear it.

II.

What a sublime discovery 'twas, to make the
Universe universal Egotism,
That all's ideal—*all ourselves*: I'll stake the
World (be it what you will) that that's no Schism.
Oh Doubt!—if thou be'st Doubt, for which some take
thee,
But which I doubt extremely—thou sole prism
Of the Truth's rays, spoil not my draught of spirit!
Heav'n's brandy, though our brain can hardly bear it.

R

III.

For ever and anon comes Indigestion
(Not the most "dainty Ariel") and perplexes
Our soarings with another sort of question :
And that which after all my spirit vexes,
Is, that I find no spot where man can rest eye on,
Without confusion of the sorts and sexes,
Of beings, stars, and this unriddled wonder,
The World, which at the worst's a glorious blunder—

IV.

If it be Chance; or if it be according
To the old Text, still better :—lest it should
Turn out so, we'll say nothing 'gainst the wording,
As several people think such hazards rude.
They're right; our days are too brief for affording
Space to dispute what *no one* ever could
Decide, and *every body one day* will
Know very clearly—or at least lie still.

V.

And therefore will I leave off metaphysical
Discussion, which is neither here nor there.
If I agree that what is, is; then this I call
Being quite perspicuous and extremely fair.
The truth is, I've grown lately rather phthisical:
I don't know what the reason is—the air
Perhaps; but as I suffer from the shocks
Of illness, I grow much more orthodox.

VI.

The first attack at once proved the Divinity;
 (But *that* I never doubted, nor the Devil;)
The next, the Virgin's mystical virginity;
 The third, the usual Origin of Evil;
The fourth at once established the whole Trinity
 On so uncontrovertible a level,
That I devoutly wished the three were four,
On purpose to believe so much the more.

VII.

To our theme.—The man who has stood on the Acropolis,
 And looked down over Attica; or he
Who has sailed where picturesque Constantinople is,
 Or seen Tombuctoo, or hath taken tea
In small-eyed China's crockery-ware metropolis,
 Or sat amidst the bricks of Nineveh,
May not think much of London's first appearance—
But ask him what he thinks of it a year hence?

VIII.

Don Juan had got out on Shooter's hill;
 Sunset the time, the place the same declivity
Which looks along that vale of good and ill,
 Where London streets ferment in full activity;
While every thing around was calm and still,
 Except the creak of wheels, which on their pivot he
Heard,—and that bee-like, bubbling, busy hum
Of cities, that boils over with their scum:—

IX.

I say, Don Juan, wrapt in contemplation,
Walked on behind his carriage, o'er the summit,
And lost in wonder of so great a nation,
Gave way to't, since he could not overcome it.
"And here," he cried, "is Freedom's chosen station;
"Here peals the people's voice, nor can entomb it
"Racks, prisons, inquisitions; resurrection
"Awaits it, each new meeting or election.

X.

"Here are chaste wives, pure lives; here people pay
"But what they please; and if that things be dear,
"Tis only that they love to throw away
"Their cash, to show how much they have a-year.
"Here laws are all inviolate; none lay
"Traps for the traveller; every highway's clear:
"Here—" he was interrupted by a knife,
With,—*"Damn your eyes! your money or your life!"*—

XI.

These freeborn sounds proceeded from four pads
In ambush laid, who had perceived him loiter
Behind his carriage; and, like handy lads,
Had seized the lucky hour to reconnoitre,
In which the heedless gentleman who gads
Upon the road, unless he prove a fighter,
May find himself within that isle of riches
Exposed to lose his life as well as breeches.

XII.

Juan, who did not understand a word
Of English, save their shibboleth, "God damn!"
And even that he had so rarely heard,
He sometimes thought it was only their "Salam,"
Or "God be with you!"—and 'tis not absurd
To think so; for half English as I am
(To my misfortune) never can I say
I heard them wish "God with you," save that way;—

XIII.

Juan yet quickly understood their gesture,
And being somewhat choleric and sudden,
Drew forth a pocket pistol from his vesture,
And fired it into one assailant's pudding—
Who fell, as rolls an ox o'er in his pasture,
And roared out, as he writhed his native mud in,
Unto his nearest follower or henchman,
"Oh Jack! I'm floor'd by that ere bloody Frenchman!"

XIV.

On which Jack and his train set off at speed,
And Juan's suite, late scattered at a distance,
Came up, all marvelling at such a deed,
And offering, as usual, late assistance.
Juan, who saw the Moon's late minion bleed
As if his veins would pour out his existence,
Stood calling out for bandages and lint,
And wished he had been less hasty with his flint.

XV.

"Perhaps," thought he, "it is the country's wont
"To welcome foreigners in this way: now
"I recollect some innkeepers who don't
"Differ, except in robbing with a bow,
"In lieu of a bare blade and brazen front.
"But what is to be done? I can't allow
"The fellow to lie groaning on the road:
"So take him up; I'll help you with the load."

XVI.

But ere they could perform this pious duty,
The dying man cried, "Hold! I've got my gruel!
"Oh! for a glass of *max*! We've missed our booty;
"Let me die where I am!" And as the fuel
Of life shrunk in his heart, and thick and sooty
The drops fell from his death-wound, and he drew ill
His breath,—he from his swelling throat untied
A kerchief, crying "Give Sal that!"—and died.

XVII.

The cravat stain'd with bloody drops fell down
Before Don Juan's feet: he could not tell
Exactly why it was before him thrown,
Nor what the meaning of the man's farewell.
Poor Tom was once a kiddy upon town,
A thorough varmint, and a *real* swell,
Full flash, all fancy, until fairly diddled,
His pockets first and then his body riddled.

XVIII.

Don Juan, having done the best he could

In all the circumstances of the case,
As soon as "Crowner's quest" allowed, pursued
His travels to the capital apace;—
Esteeming it a little hard he should

In twelve hours' time, and very little space,
Have been obliged to slay a freeborn native
In self-defence : this made him meditative.

XIX.

He from the world had cut off a great man,
Who in his time had made heroic bustle.
Who in a row like Tom could lead the van,
Booze in the ken, or at the spellken hustle?
Who queer a flat? Who (spite of Bow-street's ban)
On the high toby-spice so flash the muzzle?
Who on a lark, with black-eyed Sal (his blowing)
So prime, so swell, so nutty, and so knowing? (16)

XX.

But Tom's no more—and so no more of Tom.

Heroes must die ; and by Gods blessing 'tis
Not long before the most of them go home.

Hail! Thamis, hail! upon thy verge it is
That Juan's chariot, rolling like a drum

In thunder, holds the way it can't well miss,
Through Kennington and all the other "tons,"
Which make us wish ourselves in town at once;—

XXI.

Through Groves, so called as being void of trees,
 (Like *lucus* from *no* light;) through prospects named
Mount Pleasant, as containing nought to please,
 Nor much to climb; through little boxes framed
Of bricks, to let the dust in at your ease,
 With "To be let," upon their doors proclaimed;
Through "Rows" most modestly called "Paradise,"
 Which Eve might quit without much sacrifice;—

XXII.

Through coaches, drays, choked turnpikes, and a whirl
 Of wheels, and roar of voices, and confusion;
Here taverns wooing to a pint of "purl,"
 There mails fast flying off like a delusion;
There barbers' blocks with periwigs in curl
 In windows; here the lamplighter's infusion
Slowly distilled into the glimmering glass,
(For in those days we had not got to Gas;)—

XXIII.

Through this, and much, and more, is the approach
 Of travellers to mighty Babylon:
Whether they come by horse, or chaise, or coach,
 With slight exceptions, all the ways seem one.
I could say more, but do not choose to encroach
 Upon the guide-book's privilege. The Sun
Had set some time, and night was on the ridge
Of twilight, as the party crossed the bridge.

XXIV.

That's rather fine, the gentle sound of Thamís—
Who vindicates a moment too his stream—
Though hardly heard through multifarious "damme's."
The lamps of Westminster's more regular gleam,
The breadth of pavement, and yon shrine where fame is
A spectral resident—whose pallid beam
In shape of moonshine hovers o'er the pile—
Make this a sacred part of Albion's Isle.

XXV.

The Druid's groves are gone—so much the better :
Stone-Henge is not—but what the devil is it?—
But Bedlam still exists with its sage fetter,
That madmen may not bite you on a visit;
The Bench too seats or suits full many a debtor;
The Mansion House too (though some people may quiz it)
To me appears a stiff yet grand erection;
But then the Abbey's worth the whole collection.

XXVI.

The line of lights too up to Charing Cross,
Pall Mall, and so-forth, have a coruscation
Like gold as in comparison to dross,
Matched with the Continent's illumination,
Whose cities Night by no means deigns to gloss.
The French were not yet a lamp-lighting nation,
And when they grew so—on their new-found lanthorn,
Instead of wicks, they made a wicked man turn.

XXVII.

A row of gentlemen along the streets
Suspended may illuminate mankind,
As also bonfires made of country seats;
But the old way is best for the purblind :
The other looks like phosphorus on sheets,
A sort of Ignis-fatuus to the mind,
Which, though 'tis certain to perplex and frighten,
Must burn more mildly ere it can enlighten.

XXVIII.

But London's so well lit, that if Diogenes
Could recommence to hunt his *honest man*,
And found him not amidst the various progenies
Of this enormous city's spreading spawn,
'Twere not for want of lamps to aid his dodging his
Yet undiscovered treasure. What *I* can,
I've done to find the same throughout life's journey,
But see the world is only one attorney.

XXIX.

Over the stones still rattling, up Pall Mall,
Through crowds and carriages, but waxing thinner
As thundered knockers broke the long sealed spell
Of doors 'gainst duns, and to an early dinner
Admitted a small party as night fell,—
Don Juan, our young diplomatic sinner,
Pursued his path, and drove past some Hotels,
St. James's Palace and St. James's "Hells." (17)

XXX.

They reached the Hotel; forth streamed from the front door
A tide of well-clad waiters, and around
The mob stood, and as usual several score
Of those pedestrian Paphians who abound
In decent London, when the day-light's o'er;
Commodious but immoral, they are found
Useful, like Malthus, in promoting marriage.—
But Juan now is stepping from his carriage

XXXI.

Into one of the sweetest of hotels,
Especially for foreigners—and mostly
For those whom favour or whom fortune swells,
And cannot find a bill's small items costly.
There many an Envoy either dwelt or dwells,
(The den of many a diplomatic lost lie)
Until to some conspicuous square they pass,
And blazon o'er the door their names in brass.

XXXII.

Juan, whose was a delicate commission,
Private, though publicly important, bore
No title to point out with due precision
The exact affair on which he was sent o'er.
'Twas merely known, that on a secret mission
A foreigner of rank had graced our shore,
Young, handsome, and accomplished, who was said
(In whispers) to have turned his sovereign's head.

XXXIII.

Some rumour also of some strange adventures
Had gone before him, and his wars and loves ;
And as romantic heads are pretty painters,
And, above all, an Englishwoman's roves
Into the excursive, breaking the indentures
Of sober reason, wheresoe'er it moves,
He found himself extremely in the fashion,
Which serves our thinking people for a passion.

XXXIV.

I don't mean that they are passionless, but quite
The contrary ; but then 'tis in the head ;
Yet as the consequences are as bright
As if they acted with the heart instead,
What after all can signify the site
Of ladies' lucubrations ? So they lead
In safety to the place for which you start,
What matters if the road be head or heart ?

XXXV.

Juan presented in the proper place,
To proper placemen, every Russ credential ;
And was received with all the due grimace
By those who govern in the mood potential,
Who, seeing a handsome stripling with smooth face,
Thought (what in state affairs is most essential)
That they as easily might do the youngster,
As hawks may pounce upon a woodland songster.

XXXVI.

They erred, as aged men will do ; but by
And by we'll talk of that ; and if we don't,
'Twill be because our notion is not high
Of politicians and their double front,
Who live by lies, yet dare not boldly lie :—
Now what I love in women is, they won't
Or can't do otherwise than lie, but do it
So well, the very truth seems falsehood to it.

XXXVII.

And, after all, what is a lie ? 'Tis but
The truth in masquerade ; and I defy
Historians, heroes, lawyers, priests to put
A fact without some leaven of a lie.
The very shadow of true Truth would shut
Up annals, revelations, poesy,
And prophecy—except it should be dated
Some years before the incidents related.

XXXVIII.

Praised be all liars and lies ! Who now
Can tax my mild Muse with misanthropy ?
She rings the world's " Te Deum," and her brow
Blushes for those who will not :—but to sigh
Is idle ; let us like most others bow,
Kiss hands, feet, any part of Majesty,
After the good example of " Green Erin,"
Whose Shamrock now seems rather worse for wearing.

XXXIX.

Don Juan was presented, and his dress
 And mien excited general admiration—
 I don't know which was more admired or less :
 One monstrous diamond drew much observation,
 Which Catherine in a moment of " ivresse"
 (In love or brandy's fervent fermentation)
 Bestowed upon him, as the public learned ;
 And, to say truth, it had been fairly earned.

XL.

Besides the Ministers and underlings,
 Who must be courteous to the accredited
 Diplomats of rather wavering kings,
 Until their royal riddle's fully read,
 The very clerks,—those somewhat dirty springs
 Of office, or the House of Office, fed
 By foul corruption into streams,—even they
 Were hardly rude enough to earn their pay :

XLI.

And insolence no doubt is what they are
 Employed for, since it is their daily labour,
 In the dear offices of peace or war ; [bour,
 And should you doubt, pray ask of your next neigh-
 When for a passport, or some other bar
 To freedom, he applied (a grief and a bore)
 If he found not this spawn of taxborn riches,
 Like lap dogs, the least civil sons of b——s.

XLII

But Juan was received with much "empressement:"—
 These phrases of refinement I must borrow
 From our next neighbours' land, where like a chessman,
 There is a move set down for joy or sorrow,
 Not only in mere talking, but the press. Man
 In Islands is, it seems, downright and thorough,
 More than on continents—as if the sea
 (See Billingsgate) made even the tongue more free.

XLIII.

And yet the British "Damme's" rather attic:
 Your Continental oaths are but incontinent,
 And turn on things which no Aristocratic
 Spirit would name, and therefore even I won't anent
 This subject quote; as it would be schismatic (18).
 In politesse, and have a sound affronting in't:—
 But "Damme's" quite ethereal, though too daring—
 Platonic blasphemy, the soul of swearing.

XLIV.

For downright rudeness, ye may stay at home;
 For true or false politeness (and scarce *that*
Now) you may cross the blue deep and white foam—
 The first the emblem (rarely though) of what
 You leave behind, the next of much you come
 To meet. However 'tis no time to chat
 On general topics: poems must confine
 Themselves to unity, like this of mine.

XLV.

In the Great World,—which being interpreted
Meaneth the West or worst end of a city,
And about twice two thousand people bred
By no means to be very wise or witty,
But so sit up whilst others lie in bed,
And look down on the Universe with pity,—
Juan, as an inveterate Patrician,
Was well received by persons of condition.

XLVI.

He was a bachelor, which is a matter
Of import both to Virgin and to Bride,
The former's hymenial hopes to flatter ;
And (should she not hold fast by love or pride)
'Tis also of some moment to the latter :
A rib's a thorn in a wed Gallant's side,
Requires decorum, and is apt to double
The horrid sin—and what's still worse, the trouble.

XLVII.

But Juan was a bachelor—of arts,
And parts, and hearts: he danced and sung, and had
An air as sentimental as Mozart's
Softest of Melodies ; and could be sad
Or cheerful, without any "flaws or starts,"
Just at the proper time ; and though a lad,
Had seen the world—which is a curious sight,
And very much unlike what people write.

XLVIII.

Fair virgins blushed upon him; wedded dames
 Bloomed also in less transitory hues;
 For both commodities dwell by the Thames,
 The painting and the painted; youth, ceruse,
 Against his heart preferred their usual claims,
 Such as no gentleman can quite refuse;
 Daughters admired his dress, and pious mothers
 Enquired his income, and if he had brothers.

XLIX.

The milliners who furnish "drapery Misses" (19)
 Throughout the season, upon speculation
 Of payment ere the honey moon's last kisses
 Have waned into a crescent's coruscation,
 Thought such an opportunity as this is,
 Of a rich foreigner's initiation,
 Not to be overlooked—and gave such credit,
 That future bridegrooms swore, and sighed, and paid it.

L.

The Blues, that tender tribe, who sigh o'er sonnets,
 And with the pages of the last Review
 Line the interior of their heads or bonnets,
 Advanced in all their azure's highest hue;
 They talked bad French of Spanish, and upon its
 Late authors asked him for a hint or two;
 And which was softest, Russian or Castilian?
 And whether in his travels he saw Ilion?

LL

Juan, who was a little superficial,
And not in literature a great Drawcansir,
Examined by this learned and especial
Jury of matrons, scarce knew what to answer ;
His duties warlike, loving or official,
His steady application as a dancer,
Had kept him from the brink of Hippocrene,
Which now he found was blue instead of green.

LIF.

However, he replied at hazard, with
A modest confidence and calm assurance,
Which lent his learned lucubrations pith,
And passed for arguments of good endurance.
That prodigy, Mrs. Araminta Smith,
(Who at sixteen translated "Hercules Furens"
Into as furious English) with her best look,
Set down his sayings in her Common-place book.

LIII.

Juan knew several languages—as well
He might—and brought them up with skill, in time
To save his fame with each accomplished belle,
Who still regretted that he did not rhyme.
There wanted but this requisite to swell
His qualities (with them) into sublime :
Lady Fitz-Frisky, and Miss Mævia Mannish,
Both longed extremely to be sung in Spanish.

LIV.

However, he did pretty well, and was
Admitted as an aspirant to all
The Coteries, and, as in Banquo's glass,
At great assemblies or in parties small,
He saw ten thousand living authors pass,
That being about their average numeral ;
Also the eighty "greatest living poets,"
As every paltry living magazine can show *it's*.

LV.

In twice five years the "greatest living poet,"
Like to the champion in the fisty ring,
Is called on to support his claim, or show it,
Although 'tis an imaginary thing.
Even I—albeit I'm sure I did not know it,
Nor sought of foolscap subjects to be king,—
Was reckoned, a considerable time,
The grand Napoleon of the realms of rhyme:

LVI.

But Juan was my Moscow, and Faliero
My Leipsic, and my Mont Saint Jean seems Cain.
"La Belle Alliance" of dunces down at zero,
Now that the Lion's fall'n, may rise again:
But I will fall at least as fell my hero ;
Nor reign at all, or as a *monarch* reign ;
Or to some lonely isle of Jailors go,
With turncoat Southey for my turnkey Lowe.

LVII.

Sir Walter reigned before me ; Moore and Campbell
 Before and after ; but now grown more holy,
 The Muses upon Slon's hill must ramble
 With poets almost clergymen, or wholly ;

* * * * *

LVIII.

* * * * *

LVIX.

Then there's my gentle Euphues ; who, they say,
 Sets up for being a sort of *moral me* ;
 He'll find it rather difficult some day
 To turn out both, or either it may be.
 Some persons think that Coleridge hath the sway ;
 And Wordsworth hath supporters, two or three ;
 And that deep-mouthed Boetian " Savage Landor"
 Has taken for a swan rogue Southey's gander.

LX.

John Keats, who was killed off by one critique,
Just as he really promised something great,
If not intelligible,—without Greek
Contrived to talk about the Gods of late,
Much as they might have been supposed to speak.
Poor fellow! His was an untoward fate;
’Tis strange the mind, that very fiery particle, (20)
Should let itself be snuffed out by an Article.

LXI.

The list grows long of live and dead pretenders
To that which none will gain—or none will know
The Conqueror at least; who, ere time renders
His last reward, will have the long grass grow
Above his burnt-out brain, and sapless cinders.
If I might augur, I should rate but low
Their chances;—they’re too numerous, like the thirty
Mock tyrants, when Rome’s annals waxed but dirty.

LXII.

This is the literary *lower* Empire,
Where the Prætorian bands take up the matter;
A “dreadful trade,” like his who “gathers samphire,”
The insolent soldiery to soothe and flatter,
With the same feelings as you’d coax a vampire.
Now, were I once at home, and in good satire,
I’d try conclusions with those Janizaries,
And show them *what* an intellectual war is.

LXIII.

I think I know a trick or two, would turn

Their flanks ;—but it is hardly worth my while
With such small gear to give myself concern:

Indeed I've not the necessary bile ;
My natural temper's really aught but stern,

And even my Muse's worst reproof's a smile ;
And then she drop's a brief and modern curtsey,
And glides away, assured she never hurts ye.

LXIV.

My Juan, whom I left in deadly péril

Amongst live poets and blue ladies, past
With some small profit through that field so sterile.

Being tired in time, and neither least nor last
Left it before he had been treated very ill ;

And henceforth found himself more gaily classed
Amongst the higher spirits of the day,
'The sun's true son, no vapour, but a ray.

LXV.

His morns he passed in business—which dissected,

Was like all business, a laborious nothing,
That leads to lassitude, the most infected

And Centaur Nessus garb of mortal clothing,
And on our sophas makes us lie dejected,

And talk in tender horrors of our loathing,
All kinds of toil, save for our country's good—
Which grows no better, though 'tis time it should.

LXVI.

His afternoons he passed in visits, luncheons,
Lounging, and boxing ; and the twilight hour
In riding round those vegetable puncheons
Called "Parks," where there is neither fruit nor flower
Enough to gratify a bee's slight munchings ;
But after all it is the only "bower,"
(In Moore's phrase) where the fashionable fair
Can form a slight acquaintance with fresh air.

LXVII.

Then dress, then dinner, then awakes the world !
Then glare the lamps, then whirl the wheels, then roar
Through street and square fast flashing chariots hurled
Like harnessed meteors ; then along the floor
Chalk mimics painting ; then festoons are twirled ;
Then roll the brazen thunders of the door,
Which opens to the thousand happy few
An earthly Paradise of "Or Molu."

LXVIII.

There stands the noble Hostess, nor shall sink
With the three-thousandth curtsey ; there the Waltz,
The only dance which teaches girls to think,
Makes one in love even with its very faults,
Saloon, room, hall, o'erflow beyond their brink,
And long the latest of arrivals halts,
'Midst royal dukes and dames condemned to climb,
And gain an inch of staircase at a time.

LXI X.

Thrice happy he who, after a survey
Of the good company, can win a corner,
A door that's *in*, or boudoir *out* of the way,
Where he may fix himself like small "Jack Horner,"
And let the Babel round run as it may,
And look on as a mourner, or a scorner,
Or an approver, or a mere spectator,
Yawning a little as the night grows later.

LXX.

But this won't do, save by and by; and he
Who, like Don Juan, takes an active share,
Must steer with care through all that glittering sea
Of gems and plumes and pearls and silks, to where
He deems it his proper place to be;
Dissolving in the waltz to some soft air,
Or prouder prancing with mercurial skill
Where Science marshals forth her own quadrille.

LXXI.

Or, if he dance not, but hath higher views
Upon an heiress or his neighbour's bride,
Let him take care that that which he pursues
Is not at once too palpably descried.
Full many an eager gentleman oft rues
His haste: impatience is a blundering guide
Amongst a people famous for reflection,
Who like to play the fool with circumspection.

LXXII.

But, if you can contrive, get next at supper ;
 Or, if forestalled, get opposite, and ogle :—
 Oh ye ambrosial moments ! always upper
 In mind, a sort of sentimental bogle,
 Which sits for ever upon Memory's crupper,
 The Ghost of vanquished pleasures once in vogue ! Ill
 Can tender souls relate the rise and fall
 Of hopes and fears which shake a single ball.

LXXIII.

But these precautionary hints can touch
 Only the common run, who must pursue,
 And watch, and ward ; whose plans a word too much
 Or little overturns ; and not the few
 Or many (for the number's sometimes such)
 Whom a good mien, especially if new,
 Or fame, or name, for wit, war, sense, or nonsense,
 Permits whate'er they please, or did *not* long since.

LXXIV.

Our hero, as a hero, young and handsome,
 Noble, rich, celebrated, and a stranger,
 Like other slaves of course must pay his ransom
 Before he can escape from so much danger
 As will environ a conspicuous man. Some
 Talk about poetry, and "rack and manger,"
 And ugliness, disease, as toil and trouble ;—
 I wish they knew the life of a young noble.

T

LXXV.

They are young, but know not youth—it is anticipated;
Handsome but wasted, rich without a son;
Their vigour in a thousand arms is dissipated;
Their cash comes *from*, their wealth goes *to* a Jew;
Both senates see their nightly votes participated
Between the tyrant's and the tribune's crew;
And having voted, dined, drank, gamed, and whored,
The family vault receives another lord.

LXXVI.

"Where is the world," cries Young, "at *eighty*? Where
" 'The world in which a man was born?' Alas!
Where is the world of *eight* years past? 'Twas *there*—
I look for it—'tis gone, a Globe of Glass!
Cracked, shivered, vanished, scarcely gazed on ere
A silent change dissolves the glittering mass.
Statesmen, chiefs, orators, queens, patriots, kings,
And dandies, all are gone on the wind's wings.

XXLVII.

Where is Napoleon the Grand? God knows :
Where little Castlereagh? The devil can tell :
Where Grattan, Curran, Sheridan, all those
Who bound the bar or senate in their spell?
Where is the unhappy Queen, with all her woes?
And where the Daughter, whom the Isles loved well?
Where are those martyred Saints the Five per Cents?
And where—oh where the devil are the rents!

LXXVIII.

[ley ? Diddled.
Where's Brummel? Dished. Where's Long Pole Welles-

Where's Whitbread? Romilly? Where's George the
Where is his will? (That's not so soon unriddled) [Third?

And where is 'Fum' the Fourth, our "royal bird?"
Gone down it seems to Scotland, to be fiddled

Unto by Sawney's violin, we have heard; [ing
"Caw me, caw thee,"—for six months hath been hatch-
This scene of royal itch and loyal scratching.

LXXIX.

Where is Lord This? And where my Lady That?

The Honourable Mistresses and Misses?

Some laid aside like an old Opera hat,

Married, unmarried, and remarried: (this is
An evolution oft performed of late.)

Where are the Dublin shouts—and London hisses?
Where are the Grenvilles? Turned as usual. Where
My friends the Whigs? Exactly where they were.

LXXX.

Where are the Lady Carolines and Franchesses?

Divorced or doing thereanent. Ye annals
So brilliant, where the list of routs and dances is,—

Thou Morning Post, sole record of the pannels
Broken in carriages, and all the phantasies

Offashion,—say what streams now fill those channels?
Some die, some fly, some languish on the continent,
Because the times have hardly left them *one* tenant.

LXXXI.

Some who once set their caps at cautious Dukes,
Have taken up at length with younger brothers:
Some heiresses have bit at sharpers' hooks;
Some maids have been made wives, some merely
Others have lost their fresh and fair looks: [mothers;
In short, the list of alterations bothers.
There's little strange in this, but something strange is
The unusual quickness of these common changes.

LXXXII.

Talk not of seventy years as age; in seven
I have seen more changes, down from monarchs to
The humblest individual under heaven,
Than might suffice a moderate century through.
I knew that nought was lasting, but now even
Change grows too changeable, without being new:
Nought's permanent among the human race,
Except the Whigs not getting into place.

LXXXIII.

I have seen Napoleon, who seemed quite a Jupiter,
Shrink to a Saturn. I have seen a Duke
(No matter which) turn politician stupider,
If that can well be, than his wooden look.
But it is time that I should hoist my "blue Peter"
And sail for a new theme:—I have seen—and shook
To see it—the King hissed, and then cared;
But don't pretend to settle which was best.

LXXXIV.

I have seen the landholders without a rap—
 I have seen Johanna Southcote—I have seen
 The House of Commons turn to a tax-trap—
 I have seen that sad affair of the late Queen—
 I have seen crowns worn instead of a fool's cap—
 I have seen a Congress doing all that's mean—
 I have seen some nations like o'erloaded asses
 Kick off their burthens—meaning the high classes.

LXXXV.

I have seen small poets, and great prosers, and
 Interminable—*not eternal*—speakers—
 I have seen the Funds at war with house and land—
 I've seen the Country Gentlemen turn squeakers—
 I've seen the people ridden o'er like sand
 By slaves on horseback—I have seen malt liquors
 Exchanged for "thin potations" by John Bull—
 I have seen John half detect himself a fool.

LXXXVI.

But "Carpe diem," Juan "Carpe, carpe!"
 To-morrow sees another race as gay
 And transient, and devoured by the same harpy.
 "Life's a poor player,"—then "play out the play,
 "Ye villains!" and above all keep a sharp eye
 Much less on what you do than what you say :
 Be hypocritical, be cautious, be
 Not what you *seem*, but always what you *see*.

LXXXVII.

But how shall I relate in other Cantos
 Of what befell our hero in the land,
 Which 'tis the common cry and lie to vaunt as
 A moral Country ! but I hold my hand—
 For I disdain to write an Atalantis ;
 But 'tis as well at once to understand,
 You are not a moral people, and you know it—
 Without the aid of too sincere a poet.

LXXXVIII.

What Juan saw and underwent, shall be
 My topic, with of course the due restriction
 Which is required by proper courtesy ;
 And recollect the work is only fiction,
 And that I sing of neither mine nor me,
 Though every scribe, in some slight turn of diction,
 Will hint allusions never *meant*. Ne'er doubt
This—when I speak, I don't hint, but speak out.

LXXXIX.

Whether he married with the third or fourth
 Offspring of some sage, husband-hunting Countess,
 Or whether with some virgin of more worth
 (I mean in Fortune's matrimonial bounties)
 He took to regularly peopling Earth,
 Of which your lawful awful wedlock fount is,—
 Or whether he was taken in for damages,
 For being to excursive in his homages,—

XC.

Is yet within the unread events of time.

Thus far, go forth, thou lay, which I will back
Against the same given quantity of rhyme,

For being as much the subject of attack
As ever yet was any work sublime,

By those who love to say that white is black.
So much the better ! I may stand alone,
But would not change my free thoughts for a throne.

END OF CANTO THE ELEVENTH.



